Making the Mosaic Work?
A Study of the Canadian Interfaith Movement

Laurie Lamoureux Scholes

A Thesis

In the Department

of

Religion

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Department of Religion)

Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada
March 2015

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: **Laurie Lamoureux-Scholes**

Entitled: **Making the Mosaic Work? A Study of the Canadian Interfaith Movement**

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Religion)

complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

Signed by the final examining committee:

_____ Chair
Dr. N. Ingram

_____ External Examiner
Dr. P. Bramadat

_____ External to Program
Dr. D. Salee

_____ Examiner
Dr. L. Clarke

_____ Examiner
Dr. D. Boisvert

_____ Thesis Supervisor
Dr. F. Bird

Approved by _____
Dr. L. Orr, Graduate Program Director

December 18, 2013

_____
Dr. A. Roy, Dean
Faculty of Arts and Science

ABSTRACT

Making the Mosaic Work? A Study of the Canadian Interfaith Movement

Laurie Lamoureux Scholes, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2015

In Canada, where one's religious identity is a private affair, organized interfaith initiatives provide one of the few public forums where one is encouraged to affirm a religious conviction. More and more, Canadians are encountering different religions and spiritual paths in workplaces, neighbourhoods, leisure activities, politics and the daily news. Alongside these encounters interfaith initiatives have developed, especially in the larger urban centers of Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. While similar interfaith initiatives can be found across the country, variations in religious populations and pressing political / social concerns have influenced the distinct character of interfaith activities in each centre. Drawing on findings from 110 in-depth interviews with active members of Canadian interfaith initiatives, this thesis explores the matrix of influences which have contributed to the development of the interfaith movement within Canada and as part of the larger global interfaith movement. The research examines the motivations, approaches and types of interfaith work practised highlighting the diverse resources the interfaith movement offers for bridging the religious diversity found within the contemporary world. The study also calls attention to various challenges facing the Canadian and global interfaith movement including questions about representation, missing voices, stagnation, the need for deeper exploration of difference, strategies for intrafaith dialogue, measuring impact, and finding the required resources to build more tools and forums for interfaith work.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express gratitude to my advisor Professor Frederick Bird for the ongoing support and encouragement to fulfill my doctoral studies and dissertation research. Dr. Bird has been a constant source of inspiration from my first undergraduate ethics classes, as a mentor to my forays into teaching and publication, and throughout this research process. Thank you.

I would also like to thank the members of my thesis committee Dr. Lynda Clarke and Dr. Donald Boisvert for their mentorship, encouragement and direction, for the thesis and other teaching and research opportunities within the Department of Religion.

Thanks also to the Director and staff of the Victoria University Centre for Studies in Religion and Society for providing a short-term graduate student fellowship during the summer of 2006 where I collected the first phase of my research interviews in Vancouver and Victoria. Thanks too to Dr. Paul Bowlby and Dr. Nancy Erhard for their support of my research trip to Halifax. To Dr. Patrice Brodeur, I extend my gratitude for your confidence in this research and invitation to be lead collaborator for the report *Spaces of Interreligious Dialogue in Canada: Overview and Suggestions*, report submitted to the Citizenship and Heritage Canada in 2010.

To the 110 interfaith participants across Canada who provided the primary data for the study by agreeing to meet me in coffee shops, offices and over the phone to complete interviews – thank you!

Tina Montandon and Munit Merid of the Department of Religion thank you for your constant smiles and encouragement.

Thanks to my friends Janet Wilson for your editing assistance, and to all my friends in Barrie and Montreal who encouraged me to continue and complete the study. Special thanks to my in-laws Graham and Mary-Ellen Scholes and my parents Alfred and Kay Lamoureux for the endless support.

Thanks especially to my sons Zach and Jaden, and my 'trophy' husband Douglas Scholes for your patience, understanding and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

List of Abbreviations

CCJ	Council of Christians and Jews (International)
CCCJ	Canadian Council of Christians and Jews
CEC	Canadian Ecumenical Centre
DI	Dialogue Institute, Temple University
FGI	Faith and Globalization Initiative of the Tony Blair Faith Foundation
JES	Journal of Ecumenical Studies
IARF	International Association for Religious Freedom
IM	Interfaith Movement
NAIN	North American Interfaith Network
PICA	Pacific Interfaith Citizen's Association
SMT	Social Movement Theory
SVM	Student Volunteer Movement (Christian Ecumenical)
TBFF	Tony Blair Faith Foundation
TOU	Temple of Understanding
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
URI	United Religions Initiative
VMAS	Vancouver Multifaith Council
WCC	World Council of Churches
WCF	World Congress of Faiths
WCRP	World Congress for Religions and Peace
WPR	World Parliament of Religion (now Parliament of World Religion)
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association (Christian Ecumenical)

INTRODUCTION

On September 11, 1893, at the Chicago World's Fair, the World's Parliament of Religions (WPR) opened to welcome religious leaders and practitioners the world over to participate in an unprecedented celebration of religious diversity. As Marcus Braybrooke explained in his account of the event, the objective of the WPR was to "unite all religion against all irreligion; to make the Golden Rule the basis of this union; [and] to present to the world … the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the religious life" (Braybrooke 1992, 13). While there have been many who criticized the event for not including enough non-Christian participants, women or visible minorities on the roster, and for the over-representation of Christians who contributed to a tone of Christian triumphalism, the event is nonetheless hailed by many as the beginning of the modern interfaith movement. What began as a single exceptional, special, interesting event that attracted almost 10,000 participants has mushroomed over the twentieth century into a worldwide movement of millions who participate in tens of thousands of international, national, regional and local, formal and informal initiatives, thus becoming an ongoing, unavoidable feature of the globalized world (Pedersen 2004, 75).

The journey through the first century of the interfaith movement has been shaped by a number of factors.

Primary to the modern movement are efforts by religious scholars, from the early Christian missionary ethnographies to contemporary studies of religion, whose efforts to translate primary texts and offer rich portraits of religious traditions serve to counter stereotypes that have often tainted relations between faith communities. There have also

been numerous examples of religious leaders the world over who encourage all religious people to celebrate the various paths to the sacred available to humanity (e.g. Gandhi, the Dali Lama, most Catholic Popes since Vatican II, Rev. Martin Luther King). Many leaders have also called for religious people to join forces and work diligently to counter socio-environmental injustices and to unite against both radicalized religious expressions and the general disdain for religion found within some secular attitudes.

The twentieth century is often described as the bloodiest with major conflicts marking every decade. While many within the interfaith movement are quick to declare that most conflicts were political in motivation, as many willingly admit to the manipulation of religious doctrine and belief to fuel conflict. Thus, the struggle for peace among religions of the world has been a key motivation for many interfaith initiatives including the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF) with roots to 1900, and the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP; now Religions for Peace or RFP), an initiative that began in 1970.

Developments in communication technology and transportation in the latter half of the twentieth century have also contributed to ever-increasing global migration which, particularly in Western nations, has transformed previously homogenous social spaces into dynamic, religiously pluralistic communities where individuals might live, work, and play with people who profess different religious identities.

The increasing social reality of religious diversity, particularly in urban centers, poses a challenge to governments, religious and non-religious social organizations and individuals in their efforts to negotiate and make religious diversity work. The modern

interfaith movement has and continues to respond to this challenge through a range of initiatives, resources and tools developed to model positive strategies for bridging religious diversity in nations the world over.

Scholarship about the global interfaith movement has grown in the closing decades of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century (Braybrooke 1993; Brodeur 2005; King (S) 1998, 2011; McCarthy 2007; Michel 2002; Morgan 1994; Pedersen 2004). A common theme within the literature is a call for more research to track the development and character of the interfaith movement in different nations. This study of the Canadian interfaith movement offers one response to that call.

The Evolving Religious Landscape in Canada

In her 2004 essay Kusumita Pedersen suggests that the strongest catalyst for the development of interfaith activity in any locality is the presence of a multi-religious population where minorities are often key players (Pedersen 2004, 87).

Such is surely the case in Canada where in the closing decades of the twentieth century, the religious landscape of Canadian society has noticeably shifted. Alongside traditional Christian churches which have historically dominated the Canadian landscape, one finds Jewish Synagogues, Muslim Mosques, Hindu Mandirs, Buddhist Temples, Sikh Gurdwaras, and the now recognized sacred spaces of indigenous nations. Organizations dedicated to New Religious Movements, Paganism, the Occult, or "New Age" spirituality have become more prominent. Agnosticism and atheism have become religious

"identities" in themselves. Canadians encounter different religions and spiritual paths in workplaces, neighbourhoods, leisure activities, politics and the daily news more often.

As religious diversity becomes more prominent, so has the range of responses to this difference. In Canada, where one's religious identity is often kept private, formal and informal interfaith initiatives provide one of the few public forums that encourage participants to publicly affirm their religious convictions.

However, as with many Western nations, diversity within the Canadian religious landscape is a recent phenomenon. Table 1 demonstrates that multireligious is not the most appropriate term to describe the statistical profile of Canadian records of religious diversity throughout the first hundred years of the nation. Instead the religious profile would more accurately be described as homogenous and stable with more than 97% of Canadians claiming affiliation with traditional organized Christian denominations, a figure split almost evenly between Catholicism and various Protestant communities (See Table 1).

Table 1
Religious Affiliation, Statistics Canada*

Religion	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001*	2011+
Catholic	**41.6**	**41.7**	**39.4**	**38.7**	**41.3**	**43.4**	**44.7**	**46.7**	**47.3**	**47.3**	**45.7**	**43.2**	**39.0**
Roman	41.6	41.7	39.4	38.7	39.5	41.8	43.3	45.7	46.2	46.5	45.2		
Ukrainian	- -	--	--	--	1.8	1.6	1.4	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.5		
Protestant	**56.5**	**55.6**	**55.9**	**56.0**	**54.4**	**52.2**	**50.9**	**48.9**	**44.4**	**41.2**	**36.2**	**29.2**	**28.3**
United	–	–	–	0.1	19.5	19.2	20.5	20.1	17.5	15.6	11.5	9.5	6.1
Anglican	13.7	12.8	14.5	16.1	15.8	15.2	14.7	13.2	11.8	10.1	8.1	6.8	5.0
Presbyterian	15.9	15.8	15.6	16.1	8.4	7.2	5.6	4.5	4.0	3.4	2.4	1.3	1.4
Lutheran	1.4	1.8	3.2	3.3	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.6	3.3	2.9	2.4	2.1	1.5
Baptist	6.4	5.9	5.3	4.8	4.3	4.2	3.7	3.3	3.1	2.9	2.5	2.5	1.9
Pentecostal	–	–	–	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.5
Other	19.1	19.3	17.3	15.5	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.4	3.7	4.9	7.9	5.8	9.2
East Orthodox	–	0.3	1.2	1.9	1.0	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.7
Jewish	0.1	0.3	1.0	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0
No Religion	--	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.5	4.3	7.3	12.4	16.2	23.6
Other	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.2	1.5	3.2	5.9	7.2
Muslim											.9	2.0	3.2
Sikh											.5	.9	1.4
Hindu											.6	1.0	1.5
Buddhist											.6	1.0	1.1

Source: Excerpt from *The Daily*, June 1, 1993. A publication of Statistics Canada, Catalogue Number 96-304E.
* 2001 Figures added from census results release in *The Daily*, May 13, 2003
+ 2011 Figures from the 2011 National Household Survey. Accessed June 26, 2013.

In 1971 the statistical portrait started to change. While there are a number of socio-economic and political elements that have contributed to shifts within the religious portrait, for the purposes of this study it is important to consider two distinct factors.

First, Statistics Canada introduced a new option to the religious affiliation question: "No Religion". Since then, this new category of religious affiliation has recorded the most significant growth starting with just 3% in 1971; 8.3% in 1981; 13.7%

in 1991; 16.8% in 2001 and 23.6% in 2011 (Statistics Canada 2003a, 2013)[1]. It is important to note that while this category represents the transfer of religious affiliation by many nominal Christians towards one that more closely reflects a secularist attitude, studies suggest that as much as 50% of growth in this category is by non-Christian immigrants from Asian countries who find it difficult to choose a single religious affiliation, due in part to the understanding that many religious practices or social customs associated with ancestor worship, folk traditions, Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, are performed as required (James 1999; Statistics Canada 2003b).

The second factor that significantly altered the Canadian religious landscape was the change to immigration policies during the late 1960s, which opened opportunities for more immigrants from non-European, or non-Christian nations. As Table 2 demonstrates, the numbers are significant as on average, immigration to Canada from 1967 to 2009 was approximately 184,000 people per year. That is, over the thirty year period almost eight million people, or almost one quarter of the approximately thirty-six million people that make up the Canadian national population in the early twenty-first century, are recent immigrants (Chui et. al. 2009).

[1] From 1911 to 2001 the breakdown of the religion category increased from 30 to 232. Most of the additional categories have appeared since 1971 (Peter Beyer 2005, 15-16).

Table 2
Canadian Immigrations Statistics - 1967-2009

1967	222,876	**1978**	86,313	**1989**	192,001	**2000**	227,455
1968	183,974	**1979**	112,096	**1990**	214,230	**2001**	250,640
1969	161,531	**1980**	143,117	**1991**	230,781	**2002**	229,049
1970	147,713	**1981**	128,618	**1992**	252,842	**2003**	221,348
1971	121,900	**1982**	121,147	**1993**	255,819	**2004**	235,825
1972	122,006	**1983**	89,157	**1994**	223,875	**2005**	262,241
1973	184,200	**1984**	88,239	**1995**	212,504	**2006**	251,642
1974	218,465	**1985**	84,302	**1996**	225,773	**2007**	236,754
1975	187,881	**1986**	99,219	**1997**	216,038	**2008**	247,247
1976	149,429	**1987**	152,098	**1998**	174,198	**2009**	252,179
1977	114,914	**1988**	161,929	**1999**	189,952	**2010**	
Subtotal	**1,814,889**		**1,266,235**		**2,388,013**		**2,414,380**
						Total	**7,883,517**

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, website. Accessed: October 24, 2010.

Table 3 indicates that the majority of immigrants to Canada held a Christian religious identity. However, Table 3 also reveals a steady increase of immigrants who have identified with other religious traditions.

Table 3
Immigrants by Major Religious Denominations and Period of Immigration, Canada, 2001

	Period of immigration (%)				
	Before 1961	**1961-1970**	**1971-1980**	**1981-1990**	**1991-2001[2]**
Roman Catholic	39.2	43.4	33.9	32.9	23.0
Protestant	39.2	26.9	21.0	14.5	10.7
Christian Orthodox	3.8	6.3	3.8	3.0	6.3
Christian, not elsewhere[1]	1.3	2.2	3.8	4.9	5.3
Jewish	2.7	2.0	2.2	1.9	1.2
Muslim	0.2	1.3	5.4	7.5	15.0
Hindu	0.0	1.4	3.6	4.9	6.5
Buddhist	0.4	0.9	4.8	7.5	4.6
Sikh	0.1	1.1	3.9	4.3	4.7
No religion	11.0	13.5	16.5	17.3	21.3
Other religions	2.1	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.4

1. Includes persons who report "Christian", as well as those who report "Apostolic", "Born-again Christian" and "Evangelical".
2. Includes data up to May 15, 2001.

Source: Statistics Canada Webpage. Accessed May 25, 2008.

While growth within the other religions remains low relative to the overall population (less than 8% of Canadians are non-Christian), as Table 4 shows, the actual numbers have transformed the Canadian religious landscape to one that is increasingly multireligious, especially in the larger urban centers across the country where seven of ten immigrants tend to settle (Statistics Canada 2003b).

Table 4
Major Religious Denominations, Canada, 2011, 2001 and 1991

	2011		2001		1991	
	Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Number**	**%**
Roman Catholic	12,810,705	39.0	12,793,125	43.2	12,203,625	45.2
Protestant	9,292,040	28.3	8,654,845	29.2	9,427,675	34.9
Christian Orthodox	550,690	1.7	479,620	1.6	387,395	1.4
Christian, not elsewhere[2]	1,475,474	4.5	780,450	2.6	353,040	1.3
Muslim	1,053,945	3.2	579,640	2.0	253,265	0.9
Jewish	329,500	1.0	329,995	1.1	318,185	1.2
Buddhist	366,830	1.1	300,345	1.0	163,415	0.6
Hindu	497,960	1.5	297,200	1.0	157,015	0.6
Sikh	454,965	1.4	278,415	0.9	147,440	0.5
No Religion	7,850,605	23.9	4,796,325	16.2	3,333,245	12.3

Adapted from Source: Statistics Canada Webpage. Accessed May 25, 2008 and June 26, 2013

In assessing the steady increases in the population of each world religious traditions practised in Canada, it is prudent to also consider statistics related to the median age within each. As Table 5 shows, most of the population affiliated with diverse Christian denominations and the Jewish tradition show a median age that is close to forty years of age or higher, suggesting the community is trending beyond child-bearing years or opportunities for maintaining the population from within. Whereas, the religious traditions of many new immigrants record a median age that is much younger and more closely aligned with child-bearing years. The younger population suggests there is greater opportunity for future growth of these religious communities within Canada.

Table 5
Selected Religious Denominations by Median Age, Canada, 2001

Tradition	Median age (years)
Christian	
Roman Catholic	37.8
Presbyterian	46.0
United Church	44.1
Anglican	43.8
Lutheran	43.3
Baptist	39.3
Pentecostal	33.5
Greek Orthodox	40.7
Muslim	28.1
Jewish	41.5
Buddhist	38.0
Hindu	31.9
Sikh	29.7
No Religion	31.1

Source: Statistics Canada Webpage. Accessed May 25, 2008.

As the above tables attest, religious diversity has become a more present feature of the Canadian demographic. While Christian affiliation remains the dominant religious identity by far, there are significant numbers of Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, alongside other religious people from minority traditions, who negotiate daily life together. Within this religious diversity there are individuals who have been engaged in the process of learning more about the diverse religions practised in Canada through a range of interfaith dialogue and collaborative action initiatives active across Canada, especially in the larger urban centers of Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Over the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century, these individuals and their efforts have contributed to the development of the interfaith movement in Canada.

Purpose

The global interfaith movement is a small but significant religious voice on the world stage with internationally recognized institutions which model and promote strategies for building positive relations across religious traditions. Within Canada the interfaith movement has developed through several organizations and initiatives with many individual participants viewing Canadian interfaith work as key for building global peace and understanding across cultures. A sample of quotes from Canadians interviewed[2] for this study highlight this sentiment.

> Religious ignorance is a problem. Interfaith allows us to break barriers and build bridges. (Interview Montreal)
>
> Interfaith is a celebration of human rights! (Interview Halifax)
>
> We are all aware of the negative impact of religious fundamentalism. It could even be growing rapidly, but in essence it is divisive and fractured and ultimately won't bloom like the interfaith movement. Interfaith is right, just, proper, respective, healthy. That will make it supersede fundamentalism. (Interview Vancouver)
>
> We need to know each other's religion and culture. It's the only way forward. Interfaith humanizes the other. Understanding one another leads to acceptance, and acceptance leads to friendships which allows us to better negotiate and celebrate difference. (Interview Halifax)
>
> Interfaith is a global mission promoting non-violence and service to humanity. It allows one to become a better person, to be more tolerant and accepting, reminds us how to protect vulnerable people. Interfaith also allows us to know other peoples' religion better without shaking your own. (Interview Toronto)
>
> Interfaith is a positive example. Those involved are all wonderful people who do not make headlines but quietly make the community better. (Interview Montreal)
>
> Interfaith is a frontier. As the Canadian community becomes more of a mosaic we need to learn more about each other. Interfaith makes the religious mosaic work. (Interview Vancouver)

[2] References to interviewees will most often include the city. However, to ensure the anonymity of each interviewee, there may be some citations for which the city will not be included in the reference.

Interfaith work is obviously important to participants. The above quotes highlight the desire for participants to be part of building a positive social attitude about the benefits religious people and religious cooperation offers society. As the last quote above suggests, Canadian interfaith participants see their work as "making the religious mosaic work"[3]. The sentiments of these Canadians are reflected in literature produced by and for participants of interfaith work around the globe.

Participants have high hopes for the interfaith movement and continue to dedicate time, energy and resources to work with each other, co-religionists, and the larger society to build bridges with and appreciation for the diverse religions practiced today. Although the roots of the modern interfaith movement go back to 1893, scholarly study of this new religious voice has only just begun.

In the tradition of interpretive social science[4], this research takes the form of a primarily descriptive portrait of the development and character of the Canadian interfaith movement and its relation to the development and character of the global interfaith movement.

---

[3] The reference to a "mosaic" is a familiar term to many Canadians due to the federal government adoption of the 1988 Multiculturalism Act which made multiculturalism an ingrained, at times contested, element within public policy and discourse on Canadian identity for more than forty years. As the above tables demonstrate, in a nation with high levels of immigration and visible minorities, especially within urban centers, the "mosaic" is an apt reference for promoting the beauty found within diversity. There has been much debate about the accuracy of this model and its implications (Kelley and Trebilcock, 1998; Kymlica 1998; Milot 2009; Taylor 1992 to highlight only a few). However, for the purposes of this study the term is to be understood only as a phrase that was expressed by a multi-generation Canadian Christian interviewee to describe his impressions of the impact of interfaith work in Canada.

[4] The social scientific study of religion examines ways in which religion is experienced socially, through social interactions, structures and processes, and how such experiences influence social life. As James Beckford, celebrated sociologist of religion and author of *Social Theory and Religion* (2003), reminds us, social scientists studying religion and religious phenomenon "aspire to explain or interpret the patterns that they detect in social relations, social processes, cultural meanings and social structures" (Beckford 2003, 150).

To that end this study considers the following questions. First, what types of interfaith activities happen in Canada? How are interfaith organizations structured? Does interfaith work differ from city to city? How does the religious leader or layperson, the scholar, government programs or the curious general public influence interfaith activities? Second, who is involved? Are participants active members in a faith community or looking to interfaith activities as a new religious expression? Which faith communities are involved or not involved? Is the faith of participants reflective of the mainstream thought or more towards the margins of the tradition? Third, what motivates individuals to participate in interfaith work? How do the various motivations define the approach? Fourth, what are the key obstacles or challenges identified by interfaith participants? Who is not participating and why? Finally, how do Canadian interfaith initiatives differ from interfaith activity in other countries? What can these interfaith activities indicate about Canadian efforts to make religious pluralism work?

Interfaith initiatives in Canada run the gamut from small informal "home-study" circles, to specific outreach efforts by individual religious communities, to more formal publicly identified interfaith organizations. While similar kinds of interfaith initiatives can be found across the country, variations in religious populations and pressing political and social concerns appear to have influenced the distinct character of interfaith efforts in each region or urban centre. As an account of all interfaith activity is near impossible, this study instead offers a general portrait of the more formal publicly recognized interfaith organizations within the Canadian interfaith movement, from its roots in post-World War Two Christian-Jewish dialogues to the broader spectrum of publicly identified government, academic and grassroots interfaith groups or organizations found

throughout Canada today. A focus on public interfaith organizations may seem limiting given that there are many informal interfaith activities which occur every day in Canada. Yet, it is the work of publicly recognized interfaith organizations which offers the greatest opportunity to track the development and character of the interfaith movement in Canada given that such initiatives by definition demonstrate to the larger society the intentional cooperation of more than one religious community.

The study examines the development of interfaith organizations in Canada with a focus on organizational structure, approaches, motivations, outcomes, challenges and issues that have contributed to interfaith work in Canada, with particular attention to distinctions found within the urban centers of Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Patterns within the Canadian portrait are considered and compared with similar trends found within literature about the larger global interfaith movement.

Key Scholarly Contributions to the Study Structure

This portrait draws upon a wide range of literature produced by scholars and individuals who are engaged with various interfaith organizations and activities. The "emic" or insider perspective is at times overly optimistic and in need of further critical reflection, but nonetheless provides important reference points for tracking the development of this new religious voice. There is also a small but growing network of scholars studying the interfaith movement, whose methods and approaches to this endeavour have informed the structure and design of this research including, but not limited to, studies by Marcus Braybrooke (1993), John Berthrong (1985), Malcom D.

Brown (2002), Patrice Brodeur (2005), Sallie King (1998, 2011), Kate McCarthy (2007), Thomas Michel (2002), Peggy Morgan (1995), and Kusumita Pedersen (2004). Each author highlights key characteristics, issues and developments found within the interfaith movement activities they studied over the past two decades, which collectively provides an important framework for building this portrait.

For details about institutional developments over the first one hundred years of the global interfaith movement, the 1993 text by Marcus Braybrooke is the primary resource referenced by most scholarly and participant authors. While there is call for more critical analysis, Braybrooke offers a comprehensive historical account of the global interfaith movement which highlights significant dates, institutions, leaders, activities and structures of more than thirty international interfaith organizations from the first World Parliament of Religion (WPR) in 1893 to the lead up for the second WPR in 1993 (Braybrooke 1993). The 2004 essay by Kusumita Pedersen offers what she describes as an "incomplete portrait" of the global interfaith movement in the early twenty-first century post 9/11 world which identifies patterns in the development and influence of regional, national and international interfaith organizations and includes a set of key motivations and issues within the movement for scholars to monitor (Pedersen 2004). Patrice Brodeur calls attention to the "glocal' or global to local impact of grassroots interfaith work as a transformative resource for tracking developments in public education about religious diversity (Brodeur 2005). Essays by Sallie King offer critical analysis of significant challenges facing those within the interfaith movement including questions about representation, dialogue process, over-emphasis on Christian and

Abrahamic traditions, and the need to place the movement within larger social frameworks (King (S) 1998, 2011).

In her 1995 essay Peggy Morgan, a sociologist of religion and attendee of several interfaith meetings including the 1993 WPR, reflected on her participant/observer status at interfaith initiatives and offered strategies for studying this new religious voice including probing the status of attendees – who is there? who is not? and why?; being critical of the positive veneer applied to individual portraits of one's religion; and being attentive to any confessional language employed by participants at interfaith events which may point to potential mutations of religious identity (Morgan 1995, 163).

John Berthrong, Malcolm D. Brown, Thomas Michel and Kate McCarthy have each published portraits of interfaith work as it has developed in Canada (Berthrong 1985), England and France (Brown 2002), the Pacific Rim (Michel 2002) and the United States of America (McCarthy 2007). In 1985 John Berthrong offered an early descriptive account of the interfaith movement in Canada which highlighted activities as primarily focused on Christian ecumenical dialogue. Interfaith work was limited. One example of interfaith work offered by Berthrong was of Christian churches renting space to immigrant religious communities for collective worship practices (Berthrong 1985, 464). However, Berthrong also profiled a few formal interfaith dialogue efforts of the time including those by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (CCCJ), chapters of the World Congress for Religion and Peace (WCRP), and the nascent Christian-Muslim National Liaison Committee. As well, Berthrong noted promise for future Christian dialogue initiatives with Buddhist and Hindu communities. A significant observation offered was that many members of one ecumenical or interfaith group were often also

active in other interfaith groups within the same community or at the regional/national level. Another important observation was that in 1985 'interfaith' was essentially an unknown concept for most Canadians (Berthrong 1985).

Malcolm D. Brown utilized an ethnographic approach in his study of interfaith groups in England and France with analysis focused on examining the influence distinct political landscapes have on the motivation, structure and goals of interfaith groups (Brown 2002). In particular, France with its concept of *laïcité* has created an environment where interfaith alliances have been forged to assert the collective right for freedom of religious expression in public. Alternatively, governments in England have been actively involved in developing and promoting formal regional interfaith councils as an aid to counter social justice issues and to promote integration (ibid).

Thomas Michel describes the diverse strategies employed to address different interfaith needs in his account of individual interfaith organizations/activities that developed in the Philippines, Tripoli, Malaysia and Japan (Michel 2002). His portraits of primarily grassroots initiatives highlight a range of dialogue tools developed to negotiate everyday encounters, manage media representations of religious people, and approaches for collaborative spiritual development practices. A key theme Michel identifies is the need for ongoing education of youth to celebrate the rich diversity of living religious traditions practised throughout the world today (ibid).

Although not specifically focused on interfaith organizations, McCarthy provides the most comprehensive portrait of twenty-first century interfaith encounters through her study of interfaith activity in the United States of America (McCarthy 2007). McCarthy

employed a grounded-theory approach to her research whereby encounters with research participants drove the construction of identified patterns in the development of interfaith activities within different social contexts including scholarly discourse, political action, grassroots endeavours, interfaith marriage and online forums (ibid, 5). Her conclusions emphasize the ways in which interfaith encounters "call attention to the layered quality of American religious diversity" (McCarthy 2007, 209). McCarthy was surprised at the relatively minor role formal dialogue played in bridging and building interreligious relations with *acting* interfaith being far more important than what it *means* to be involved (ibid, 201 author emphasis). Success was most often found within organizations that came together to work for the community good, with formal dialogue pushed to the bottom of the agenda. A significant challenge identified was the need to be attentive to the limited involvement of conservative or marginal voices, and the need for additional dialogue tools to delve more deeply into contentious religious differences. McCarthy also recommends more research to track the role and development of youth within interfaith encounters noting that alongside a high degree of religious illiteracy, youth also rank as the most religiously tolerant age cohort (ibid, 207). In a social context where diversity in all shapes and forms are celebrated, interreligious activities are increasingly normative with some young Americans seeing 'interfaith' as a new religious identity option (ibid). Although recognized as small and limited in outreach, McCarthy celebrates interfaith work as offering a "glimpse of a future for American religion in which we finally get pluralism right" (ibid, 210).

Methodology

In keeping with the above authors, this study identifies and examines themes and social influences that have contributed to the development and character of the Canadian interfaith movement. However, unlike many of the above cited authors (Brown excepted), who have actively participated in shaping the interfaith movement, I am not an active member of any interfaith organization. Instead, my motivation to pursue this study stems from a desire to better understand the dynamic nature of the religious landscape in Canada and beyond, through examination of the social-historical forces that contribute to the process in which individuals construct and maintain religious identities, particularly within an increasingly pluralistic society. Religion has been a source of conflict over the ages and into contemporary times remains a taboo subject for many. I am curious about how religious people might channel their religious values toward bridging this diversity. In particular, I wondered if the interfaith movement in general, and within Canada specifically, might be a resource for building the social tools required to negotiate religious diversity in a positive way. Thus my approach to this study offers an 'etic' or outsider perspective grounded in interpretive social science methodologies.

In particular, this study utilized a grounded theory approach which is commonly employed in qualitative research studying social-interactional processes (Charmaz 2003; Engler 2011; Lofland and Lofland 1995; McCarthy 2007). Grounded theory is a methodology that is sometimes referred to as the "constant comparative method" in that the researcher is constantly comparing data with emerging concepts (Charmaz 2003, 506). What makes the methodology distinct is the emphasis on the research beginning with primary data, often collected through qualitative interview techniques, followed by

literature reviews to further explore, compare and/or verify categories identified in the primary research. As Charmaz explains, "grounded theorists portray [the researcher's] understandings of research participants' actions and meanings, offer abstract interpretations of empirical relationships, and create conditional statements about the implications of their analysis" (ibid, 508).

The portrait of the Canadian interfaith movement began with analysis of primary data collected from one hundred and ten in-depth interviews with active participants in publicly recognized interfaith initiatives across Canada conducted between 2006 and 2009 with some follow-up interviews in 2010. Initial interviewees were identified through internet searches of interfaith organizations within each city (Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, Victoria), and supplemented using the snowball method of asking each interviewee to recommend other local interfaith participants. Thus the interviewee pool is a representative sample of interfaith participants in Canada. Interviewees were treated primarily as informants who offered information about the particular interfaith groups and activities they participated in. As interviews were collected, each was coded and collated to identify emerging concepts and categories which then transformed questions asked in subsequent interviews to allow for further probing of patterns within the data. This approach to the primary data resulted in the identification of interfaith work within the social sectors of government sponsored initiatives, academic endeavours and grassroots activities. The data also revealed initial patterns in the historical development of the movement, the range of religious voices involved, motivations for participation, types of institutional frameworks, the influence of interfaith work on individual religiosity, participant relations with fellow interfaith

members and with co-religionists, and a range of concerns and hopes for the future of the movement. This set of categories informed the research of literature about the global and Canadian interfaith movement found within public record, official websites, academic and popular literature. The primarily emic perspective within the literature was examined to both affirm patterns and expand the range of examples found within each of the above categories identified within the Canadian portrait. The study offers an updated, primarily descriptive portrait of the Canadian interfaith movement which highlights characteristics that have contributed to the growth of the interfaith movement nationally and internationally, identifies issues and concerns for ongoing development, and points to themes requiring further research.

At this point it is important to note what the study does not do. First, while there are several interviewees who identify their interfaith work as a positive social capital building endeavour, a theme also expressed within the literature, the study was not designed to test this claim. Instead, the concept was recognized as a theme which merits further empirical study to measure and better understand the potential for social capital building found within the interfaith movement. Second, the title of the thesis includes the question "making the religious mosaic work?" While the term 'mosaic' is a reference often associated with promotion of multiculturalism policy in Canada, the study was not designed to test this claim. Rather, for the purposes of this study, the reference should be understood primarily as a quote, an application of the well-known metaphor by a multi-generation Canadian Christian interviewee who identifies interfaith work as another opportunity for Canadians to celebrate the beauty found within religious diversity. The question mark was included in the title to highlight the mixed results of the study.

Terminology

Interfaith initiatives in Canada respond to a full range of issues and concerns with structures and activities reflecting the interests of members within each organization. Interfaith organizations may identify two or more specific faith traditions (e.g., Canadian Council of Christians and Jews), or include in their name such terms as 'interfaith', 'interreligious', 'interspiritual' or 'multifaith' to indicate the presence of two or more religious traditions active in the aims of the organization (e.g., Interfaith Council of Halifax, Ontario Multifaith Council, Vancouver Interspiritual Centre, Toronto Interreligious and Multicultural Family Festival).

In scholarly approaches to the study, the terminology employed is equally flexible. That said, 'interreligious' has been a more prominent term within scholarly circles, especially in early to late-twentieth century texts (Pedersen 2004, 77). Within the Canadian context use of the terms 'interreligious' or '*interreligieux*' tends to be more prominent among francophone scholars and organizations who tend toward more formal dialogue activities which emphasize official positions and doctrine (Interviews Montreal).[5] Interfaith and multifaith are interchangeable terms that since the 1970s have become the more frequently used reference, especially among lay-practitioners, due to

[5] The preference for Quebec francophone scholars and participants to use *'interreligieux'* may also reflect the often contested interpretation by Quebeckers of the Canadian federal government adoption of the Multiculturalism Act in 1988. In Quebec the preference is to use the term 'interculturalism". While both imply what Charles Taylor describes as the "dual goal for recognizing difference and integration", in Quebec the adoption of 'interculturalism' places greater emphasis on the latter (Taylor 2013; 1). Likewise, within dialogue settings in which the preferred term is "interreligious" or "*interreligieux*", the emphasis tends more toward maintaining the more formal structure and distinct qualities found within each religion as the clear markers for establishing procedures and content to be discussed at the dialogue table. This process models the orthodoxy strategies used to build ecumenical relations among Christians.

the emphasis of bringing one's faith perspective to the work (Pedersen 2004, 77). This study will generally employ the term interfaith.

Occasionally within the literature and with more formal dialogues, scholars or participants may use the term 'ecumenical' to describe the aims of the interfaith dialogue as a means to refer to the 'universal' or 'worldwide' scope associated with the term. The use of the term was more prominent in dialogue efforts of the early twentieth century up to the 1970s with some Christian theologians continuing to use 'ecumenical' to describe interfaith relation building. However, since the 1990s, within the interfaith movement most scholars and participants instead understand the term ecumenical as a descriptor of 'intrafaith' efforts to build relations amongst the diverse denominations found within the Christian tradition. That said, the term 'intrafaith' extends beyond Christian 'ecumenical' efforts in that it may also refer to dialogue efforts that occur across expressions within any religious tradition. For example, across Canada there are several Buddhist intrafaith organizations which attract individuals from diverse ethnic or culturally defined expressions of Buddhism. Within the interfaith movement there are increasing calls for participants to stimulate intrafaith dialogues amongst conservative to liberal expressions within a tradition.

Outline

The research findings have been organized into three parts to reflect themes identified in the study. Although the research began within the field gathering data from participants, Part One opens with a general overview of current threads in scholarly research focused on the larger theme of negotiating religious diversity; followed by Part

Two which provides a profile of the history, motivations, approaches and issues found within the global interfaith movement, before closing with Part Three where the fieldwork research informs the detailed portrait of the character and development of the Canadian interfaith movement, concluding with observations about shared features, omissions, and suggestions for future research.

Aside from the above account of scholarship about the interfaith movement which has informed the shape and structure of this research, the study does not include a further section or chapter to review relevant literature. Instead, as mentioned above, themes from the primary research (history, range of voices, motivations, types/approaches, and issues), are explored within the literature and examined to affirm patterns identified through the fieldwork research and to offer examples of similar trends, or absence thereof, found within the global interfaith movement. As such, references and analysis of texts that examine and describe interfaith work have been integrated into the discussion within each chapter. That said, the opening of Part Two includes additional comments about the literature reviewed for this study, highlighting limitations in the research to date including the primarily emic or insider perspective that is evident in most texts and online resources about the interfaith movement.

Part One opens with Chapter One, which provides an overview of scholarship that has examined strategies for approaching/knowing the religious other. The chapter examines the tripartite model of exclusive/inclusive/pluralist views Christians employ in approaching the religious other, first introduced by Alan Race and unpacked by Paul Knitter (Knitter 2003 (1985)). The account is followed by a selective review of debates about the theological merits of the model from both Christian and Muslim perspectives.

This is followed by a review of contemporary scholarship on the problem of religious illiteracy and the call for more tools to negotiate the religious diversity which marks the contemporary global reality. The chapter closes by introducing the global interfaith movement as one such response to this call.

Part Two focuses on developments within the modern global interfaith movement and relies on themes explored within literature which offers a primarily 'emic' or insider/participant perspective. Findings have been grouped into three chapters. Chapter Two opens with examples from several texts focused on historical developments of interfaith work since 1893 which contributed to identifying five phases of development within the global interfaith movement. Chapter Three explores the leading motivations, approaches and types of interfaith activities found within interfaith work. Chapter Four highlights significant trends and issues that challenge the development of the interfaith movement and efforts to study this new religious voice.

In Part Three the study shifts to examine developments within the interfaith movement in Canada from its historical foundations through to contemporary activities. Chapter Five examines the historical development of the interfaith movement in Canada including an overview of the types of interfaith activity and patterns within the institutional framework of various interfaith initiatives (formal or informal; private or public). Chapter Six provides descriptive highlights of official responses to pluralism, in particular the establishment of interfaith advisory committees within several government sectors including corrections services, the military, healthcare, education and provincial councils. The chapter closes with an account of grassroots responses which tend to focus on the key tasks of bridge-building (networking), education, social justice activities, with

a small section highlighting the limited political activity found within the Canadian movement. As interfaith activity in Canada is found primarily in major urban centers where religious diversity is most common, Chapter Seven provides a profile of interfaith work in the main urban centers across Canada including Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Chapter Eight unpacks profiles of participants active within Canadian interfaith organizations highlighting patterns in demographic characteristics, motivation for participation (personal growth, education, community building, social activism), perceived challenges, considerations about the positive or negative influence of Canadian multiculturalism on interfaith work, and reflections on the future of the interfaith movement in Canada and beyond.

The study closes with Chapter Nine which provides observations that compare key characteristics of the Canadian interfaith movement with the global interfaith movement. The Canadian interfaith movement identifies many of the same benefits found in the global movement including diverse organizations, personal growth, the development of deep friendship and a strong optimism that interfaith is becoming more mainstream. Canadian interfaith participants are also grappling with many of the same challenges found within the global movement including: issues of equitable representation (the need for more participation by women and members from conservative, ethnic-based and marginalized religious communities – especially First Nations people in Canada); the need for additional dialogue tools when discussing contentious or conflicting views; development of strategies for initiating and supporting intrafaith dialogue efforts; concern about resources to support interfaith work; and the

need to strengthen communication amongst the various interfaith initiatives – government, academic and grassroots, currently active in Canada and beyond,

The comparison also identified key elements missing in both the global and Canadian interfaith movement including: the absence of ethnic-Christians from the dialogue table, discussion about the primary status of Christians; the related question of why interfaith work seems to be concentrated in Western setting; and the need for further reflection on how to respond to the stagnation and decline of several long-term formal interfaith organizations; and a lack of tools for effectively assessing the impact of the movement.

The conclusion also highlights the importance of drawing from other theoretical frameworks for tracking developments within the interfaith movement. For example, to assess the impact of interfaith work on changing social attitudes about religious diversity, there is a need to recognize the place of interfaith work within the larger rights-based framework of social movements which have emphasized the role of human rights as key markers for defining social attitudes about the other (e.g., civil rights, women's rights, gay rights, disability rights). How have rights-based social movements influenced the development of the interfaith movement? And what can the interfaith movement gain from paying closer attention to the tools, resources and strategies other rights-based social movements employ – particularly promise-driven social movements[6] - to foster

[6] Most social movements are motivated by a grievance-driven approach. That is, there is an identified social disadvantage or suffering endured by a group that is highlighted primarily through protest tactics for the purpose of changing public policy and social attitudes. Promise-driven approaches are moved more by hope than protest. That is, promise-driven movement identify an ideal social good and through examples of cooperation work to build the necessary resources to support social change. (Konieczny 2009; Price, Nonini, and Fox Tree 2008).

change in social attitudes? New Religious Movement theory (NRM), also provides important analytical tools for monitoring and evaluating developments within the interfaith movement as a place for religious or spiritual seekers to explore religion and religious practice in a non-threatening way, and to study the development of mutated or hybrid religious identities found within the interfaith movement, particularly among youth who have self-declared "interfaith is my new religion" (Interviews Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver).

The results of this study affirm that within Canadian interfaith organizations there exists a small but significant population committed to developing and enhancing common shared values – to creating a social norm which encourages respectful, open-ended dialogues with religious others. Although not exclusive to the interfaith movement, interfaith groups with the right tools and resources have the potential to play an important public role in championing this value.

The modern interfaith movement marks its beginning at the 1893 World's Parliament of Religion (WPR). However, significant development and growth has been most prominent in the closing decades of the twentieth century and particularly since the second WPR in 1993 continuing into the early twenty-first century. At this juncture, scholars agree we are still in the early development of the global interfaith movement and there is a need for further study to better understand the impact of this religious voice from the global to local stage. This research is a contribution to that effort.

PART ONE. INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS

CHAPTER ONE: THE INTERFAITH MOVEMENT: A BY-PRODUCT OF ENCOUNTERING THE RELIGIOUS "OTHER"

What is the modern interfaith movement? Is it a social movement? or a New Religious Movement? Is it a counter movement against the "madness" of radicalized forms of religious expression? Is it an important social force for cultivating progressive or positive religious social capital (Bramadat 2005; Pedersen 2004; Ammerman 2010), or a complementary by-product of the human rights movement (King 2011)? Or is it the "beacon of hope" that humanity depends upon to negotiate peaceful solutions to the political, economic, social and environmental challenges of the new axial age of globalization (Interview Vancouver)? The answer seems to depend on who is asked.

1.1. Interfaith Relations: A By-Product of Encountering the Religious "Other"

Interfaith encounters and exchanges have been included in recorded histories of religions practised throughout the world. Most often written accounts tend toward the polemic side of the spectrum with portraits that reflect a tone of hostility and contempt. For example, a 2001 study by Muhammad Khalid Masud examined the socio-religious meanings of various names employed by Muslims and Christians for each other from the time of the crusades to the twentieth century. Masud argues the process of naming the 'other' is a social exercise for placing an outsider within a known cultural map or worldview (Masud 2001, 128). A common result of the exercise is to create names for the other that are often derogatory in nature reflecting a perception of the other as one who is

"seen as an intruder or an enemy" (ibid, 129). This tendency to defame or misrepresent the religious other has been identified as one of the most serious issues impacting historical to current Muslim/other relations (Clarke 1998; Duran 1992; Esposito 2004; Goddard 1995, 1996 & 2000; Mariati 2004; Masud 2001; Mitri 1999; Moussalli 1998; Murad 1999; Osman 1998; Rothstien 2007; Sway 2003; Takim 2004; Waardenburg 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003; Zebiri 2001).

Negative caricatures of Muslims have been present within Christianity and Western civilization since before the crusades. Initially developed in the polemic writings of Christian writers in the middle ages, negative stereotypes portrayed Muslims as "barbarians", "the anti-Christ", "idolaters", "primitive" (Masud 2001, 129-130). Throughout the colonial period the negative representations were built upon by both Christian and colonial authorities who described Muslims as "backward" people who oppressed their women and followed superstitious beliefs. Increasingly in the twentieth century, those stereotypes have been further built upon with references to the "aggressive", "violent" and "suicidal nature" of Islam which supports radical and extremist attitudes and terrorist activities (Goddard 2000; Masud 2001; Zebiri 2001). This type of profiling has in the post 9/11 era too often been conflated from isolated radical groups to be understood as characteristics embraced by all Muslims, ultimately contributing to xenophobic attitudes and prejudices against Muslims fueling incidences of verbal and physical assaults on Muslims and their institutions. Many of the above named authors suggest such attitudes are grounded in ignorance and that there must be a concerted effort by all Muslims to educate Western political and religious leaders and the

general public about the rich history and dynamic/diverse nature of Islam expressed by Muslims around the world (ibid).

Of course misrepresentations flow both ways. In 2001, Kate Zebiri reviewed several conservative/exclusivist/polemic Muslim authors in Britain who write primarily for a Muslim audience. Her study identifies the regular use of negative adjectives to describe Christians and the West in ways that mirror many of the adjectives often found in negative depictions of Muslims, including: aggressive, power mongering, intolerant, fanatical, incompatible with democracy, backward, irrational and primitive (Zebiri 2001, 199).

Despite continued polemic depictions of the religious other, respectful dialogue between faith communities is not a new phenomenon. All major world religions offer examples of peaceful encounters with individuals or communities from different religious traditions. Within interfaith circles the third century B.C.E. Buddhist Emperor Ashoka, the sixteenth century C.E. Mughal Emperor Akbar the great, and Muslim Spain are often held forth as historical examples of leadership for promoting acceptance and celebration of religious diversity (Braybrooke 1993, 1). Yet found within the historical record are many more examples of violent clashes amongst faith communities when ideological differences could not be bridged. The modern interfaith movement focus is to foster sentiments more aligned with promoting religious diversity, however many come to interfaith work in an effort to address divisions forged through violent clashes.

Roots of the modern interfaith movement can be traced to the European colonial period. Without negating the oppressive and violent nature of colonial encounters, the

period was also a time in modern history when many Europeans first encountered and recorded the religious other. In Western histories, these initial accounts, often recorded by missionaries, tended toward portraits of the religious other as 'primitive' or 'demonic' (Choquette 2004, 60). Although skewed, the accounts offered primary data which fed into what became the formal scholarly pursuit for knowledge about the religious other. Nineteenth century studies by Sir James Frazer, Max Müller, E. B. Taylor, Max Weber among others, offered foundational scholarly perspectives on the religious other: comparative studies of religious rituals, myths, beliefs; translations of religious texts; and early analysis of the social impact of religious beliefs/practices (Capp 1995, 157-208). Such scholarship offered an alternative approach to the religious other, one grounded within the scientific method whereby studies of the beliefs, rituals, and social structure of religious traditions were approached objectively, empirically and descriptively. While the objectivity of early scholarship has been criticized for too often reflecting an ontological approach placing Christian and/or Western thought as the triumphal or superior expression, this new field of study contributed to the early development of more tolerant social attitudes about the religious other. For example at the first World Parliament of Religion in 1893, many of the papers focused on non-Christian traditions were presented by religious studies scholars including Max Müeller who famously predicted that the event would, "take its place as one of the most memorable events in the history of the world. … it will be remembered, aye, will bear fruit, when everything else of the mighty Columbian Exhibition has long been swept away from the memory of man" (Braybrooke 1992, 7).

Kenneth Surin offers a helpful model to demonstrate shifts within the European or Western Christian social attitudes about the religious other (Surin 1990). Surin outlined four "general paradigms" used by "Europeans and 'Westerners' to 'interpret' and 'explain' non-European cultures and peoples" (ibid, 197). The first social attitude embraced up to and including the sixteenth century, understood the religious "other" in negative Christian terms, that is the other was considered heretical and demonized. The second shift occurred throughout the Enlightenment (colonization) period during which the intellectual development of Europeans was used as the norm to judge the "primitive" other. The third shift occurred in the nineteenth century with the introduction of evolutionary models whereby 'others' were delegated to lesser stages of development in comparison with the superiority of the scientific and technologically advanced Christian West. However, since the early twentieth century, as encounters among peoples with different worldviews has increased, there has been a notable shift in attitudes about the religious other which "recognizes difference as being *merely* cultural", that is there has been a democratization of difference (Surin 1990, 198; author's emphasis).

This democratization of difference has been fostered in part by the ongoing commitment of scholars within the field of religious studies to expand knowledge about the religious other. Literature produced over the twentieth century offers greater access to the histories, sacred texts/commentaries, beliefs, rituals and social organizations of religious traditions around the world. The early 1960s in particular, marks a period in which many Western universities either expanded theological studies programs or opened new faculties, departments or programs dedicated to religious studies increasing the

academic focus on historical to contemporary developments within all world religions (King 2011, 103).

Alongside developments within scholarly circles, throughout the twentieth century advancements in transportation and communication technology coupled with changes to immigration policies have allowed for greater circulation of people globally, transforming the religious landscape from one of homogeneity to diversity, the transformation is especially pronounced within western urban environments. As such, in the closing decades of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, theologians, religious studies and social theorists have dedicated much ink to producing studies about religious pluralism and negotiating religious diversity. A sample selection of scholarship within the sociology of religion include those focused on how living with religious diversity impacts: the religious identity of practitioners (Berthrong 1999; Borsboom and Jespers (Eds) 2003; Bouma 1995, 1997; Carroll and Clark 1993; Shadid and van Koningsveld (Eds) 2002; Wuthnow 1999); social and public policy issues (Barker 2008; Beyer 2011; Casanova 2001; Guinn, Barringar and Young (Eds) 1999; Livezey 2000; Meister (Ed) 2011); global migration/integration (Beyer 2003a, 2003b, 2006; Bramadat and Koenig (Eds) 2009; Foley and Hoge 2007; Numrich 2000); social problems (Beckford 2011; Hjelm (Ed) 2011); and social attitudes about the religious other (Lännström (Ed) 2004; Lawrence 2002; Numrich 2009; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Rothstein 2007; Wuthnow 2005).

Within Canada several scholars have similarly been active in their examination of the impact of religious diversity on the Canadian landscape. Sample studies include those focused on shifts in religious demographics (Beyer 1995, 2000, 2003c, 2005b;

Bibby 1987, 1993, 1997, 2002; Bowlby 2003; O'Toole 1996; Olson and Hadaway 1999); religious communities or traditions practised within the multicultural Canadian context (Beaman and Beyer (Eds) 2008; Bramadat and Seljak (Eds) 2005, 2008; Choquette 2004); law and government policy (Beaman (Ed) 2008; Biles and Ibrahim 2005; Lefebvre (Ed) 2005; Moon (Ed) 2008; Van Die (Ed) 2001); healthcare (Coward (Ed) 1999; Stephenson 2005); education (Seljak 2005; Sweet 1997) and integration of immigrants (Beyer 2005a; Cote 2008; Milot 2009; Stoker 2007).

While only a small selection of European and North American scholars, the above listed studies (and dates of publication), call attention to the ongoing impact religion has on contemporary society and the commitment of scholars to highlight the social benefits, issues, challenges and negotiations that accompany religious diversity. As Paul Bramadat stated, "religion is at or near the center of so many of the world's most pressing and complicated issues" (Bramadat 2009: 4).

Religion is also a complicated concept in part due to its multi-vocal nature. As is often stated in many introduction to religion courses, it is better to think of religion in the plural – that is Christianities, Islams, Judaisms, Hinduisms, Buddhisms, Aboriginal Traditions, etc. To further complicate the situation, within traditions distinct expressions are often due to divergent interpretations of doctrine. In some cases the distinction can result in one expression not recognizing another as being within the overarching faith tradition. For example, in discussing intrafaith or ecumenical relations in Canada with self-identified evangelical Christians, when broaching the concept of shared communion it was not uncommon to come across statements like 'shared communion with members of the United Church is not possible. They are not Christian – they don't even profess a

belief in Christ or God' (Interview Halifax, Montreal, Toronto). Such exclusivist views are not limited to intrafaith perspectives but can also extend to defining approaches for interfaith encounters with the religious other.

1.2. Defining the Religious "Other": Exclusive, Inclusive, Pluralistic Views and Beyond

Within most world religions one can find guidance for how to respond to the religious other. However for monotheistic traditions, such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism, negotiating these relations can be particularly problematic as the religious other poses challenges to the foundational claim of the exclusive salvific doctrine found within each tradition. To demonstrate, the following offers an examination of approaches found within Christian and Muslim responses to the religious other. Although all religious traditions have histories of encounter and responses to the religious other, Christians and Muslims represent the two largest religious traditions in the world today. Both are proselytizing traditions which have through the ages grown as a result of encounter and conversion of the religious other. Both have also had to grapple with the twentieth century challenge of how to respectfully approach the religious other when conversion is not an option.

1.2.1. Christians and the Religious Other

To better understand the spectrum of Christian responses to the religious other, in 1985 Paul Knitter wrote, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes*

Toward the World Religions. Even though Knitter wrote the text thirty years ago, it continues to serve as a comprehensive scholarly examination of the key arguments, thinkers, proponents and opponents found within the full spectrum of Christian theological approaches to religious diversity. The spectrum was built upon a model developed by Alan Race in which three types of theological responses to the religious other were identified - exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist. While the model has many critics, it has become part of the interfaith vocabulary and is used a baseline model for many negotiating interfaith relations, especially with individuals in the process of establishing new dialogue groups. The essentials for each approach are as follows.

Exclusive

Those who hold to an "exclusivist" Christian approach are best understood to believe that there is no divine revelation outside of the Bible, the New Testament in particular, and that salvation, or eternal life granted by God, can only be achieved through Christ by confessed Christians. Thus for the "exclusivist" Christian, dialogue with individuals from another faith is to be viewed only as an opportunity to witness the faith and encourage non-Christians to abandon their false traditions and convert to Christianity.

Inclusive

The "inclusivist" Christian approach is held by Christians who are more willing to accept that other religions may have received divine revelation, albeit through the Christian Holy Spirit. However, God's salvation continues to be found only through Christ. Within the "inclusivist" position there are those who hold to the argument offered

by Karl Rahner in the 1969 essay "Anonymous Christians", whereby other faith traditions may include salvific formulas within their distinct divine revelations (Rahner 1969). However, in reality, the salvation achieved is through Christ, they just don't realize it. Thus, interreligious dialogue with those who hold to the "inclusivist" approach tends to be more open than those with a pure "exclusivist" position, in that there is some interest in learning more about the alternative divine revelations found in other traditions. Yet since the "inclusivist" remains firm in the unique salvific nature of Christ, knowledge of other faith traditions is by and large understood to be but an extension of the Christian formula.

Pluralist

The "pluralist" approach has been developed by Christians who tend toward a "theocentric" rather than "Christocentric" view of their faith tradition, that is, faith is directed toward the overarching divinity of God the creator, with Christianity representing but one path toward God. Thus, pluralists hold that the divine is multi-faceted and manifests itself in distinct ways to distinct groups of people. As such, the pluralist contends that the many revelations and salvific formulas found within world religions offer distinct perspectives that do not necessarily override other religious belief systems. Rather, they contend that exposure to diverse perspectives may instead enrich one's own faith. In other words, the pluralist understands interreligious dialogue to be an opportunity to enrich one's personal faith by witnessing the various ways other traditions understand the divine (Knitter 1985).

While the essential tripartite spectrum was identified by Race, Knitter offers a more nuanced model that clearly identifies particular sectarian alignments (see Table 6). For example, Knitter identifies most Evangelicals as conservatives firmly rooted on the "exclusive" side of the spectrum, followed by mainline Protestants then Catholics under two variations of the "inclusive" rubric (with Protestants tending toward the more conservative expression than Catholics), before broadening out to the "pluralist" leaning theocentric model and Knitter's own process oriented "unitive" or pluralist model.

Knitter recognizes each category as an "ideal" type, that is, the association of particular sectarian ideologies within a particular theological response to pluralism does not necessarily reflect the attitudes of all members belonging to those communities. Nonetheless, Knitter argued the model provides an effective tool for identifying the spectrum of responses one may face during interreligious encounters with Christians.

Table 6
Typology of Christian Theological Responses to Religious Pluralism[7]

Exclusive ----------Inclusive ----------Pluralist

Conservative Evangelical Model	**Mainline Protestant Model**	**The Catholic Model**	**Theocentric Model**	**Unitive Pluralism of Religions**
One True Religion	Salvation Only in Christ	Many Ways, One Norm	Many Ways to the Centre	Doing Before Knowing
Revelation and Salvation through Christ alone	Revelation can be from outside but Salvation only through Christ	Religions are ways of Salvation but Christ is the normative model for all revelation and grace	Radical transformation from Christocentric to Theocentric View of the living Mystery	Process Theology Theological Truth evolves; a result of encounters open to the unique nature of each religion
Evangelical Fundamental Conservative	Main-line Protestant Liberal Evangelicals Conservative Catholics	Catholics Anglicans Orthodox Christians Third World Protest Process Theologians World Council of Churches	Liberal theologians Liberation/political theologians Theologians engaged in dialogue	Theologians engaged in dialogue exercises Unitarians, Liberal United Church

Less but Significant----------Most ----------Least
Number of Christians

It is important to note that although Knitter alludes to the fact that the spectrum of responses is not evenly embraced by members throughout the Christian community, those who hail from the "pluralist" side are a minor "but growing" voice within the tradition (Knitter 1985, 146). In other words, as the line at the bottom of Table 6 suggests, the majority of Christian responses to the religious other can be found in the "inclusive" to "exclusive" side of the spectrum. While Knitter is optimistic about the potential growth of "pluralist" leaning responses he does recognize that the "exclusivist" views held by those with more conservative or fundamentalist beliefs cannot be ignored or minimized.

[7] Table six was compiled as a visual chart of the exclusive to pluralist models examined in the Paul Knitter text *No Other Name? A Critical survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions (*1985).

Building upon the model, Knitter teamed with another well-known pluralist theologian John Hick as co-editor of the text *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions (1987).* The text includes several essays by theologians who support the pluralist approach. Notable among the contributors are essays by John Hick, Gordon Kaufman, Langdon Gilkey, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Stanley Sammartha, Majorie Hewitt Suchocki and Tom Driver, all of whom are celebrated as key Christian theologians within the interfaith movement. While each author approaches the subject from a specific angle, the collective thrust of the text is that the superiority claims found within Christian inclusivist and exclusivist approaches to the religious other make it difficult for Christians to adequately respond to the reality of religious diversity that marks contemporary life. Another key theme that cuts across the text is the personal benefit one gains by adopting an open pluralist approach when encountering individuals from other religious traditions (i.e., the opportunity to enrich one's personal faith, to mine the tradition and find what is shared, what is distinct, even find something new). Several authors also highlight positive ethical implications open interreligious dialogue brings to the task of addressing difficult socio-political global issues facing humanity, including economic and gender inequity, social justice issues and environmental degradation – shared problems, shared humanity (Knitter and Hick (Eds) 1987).

However, as the model suggests, not all Christians embrace the pluralist leaning directives offered by the contributors to the Knitter/Hick text. This is particularly evident in the collection of response essays in the text *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* edited by Gavin D'Costa (1990). These

essays span the spectrum of Christian theological approaches to the religious other. However, the majority were firmly grounded in the inclusivist approach.

There are a few notable exceptions. The essay by John Millbank offered a passionate defence of the exclusivist approach to pluralism which calls all Christians to fulfill the primary duty of witnessing the faith in all encounters with the religious other (Millbank 1990).

At the other end of the spectrum, there are the two essays of note: one by John B. Cobb, and the other by Kenneth Surin. While both authors appreciate the openness of the pluralist approach, they are critical of the potential for the pluralist position to be exclusionary as the required openness would by definition exclude from dialogue those Christians who self-identify more closely to the exclusive or inclusive side of the spectrum (Cobb 1990; Surin 1990).

Of the remaining authors included in the text, there was general agreement in critique of the pluralist model which was charged with 'watering down' the uniqueness of both the Christian divine revelation and the salvific nature of Christ, a price they argue is too high for many Christians to pay (D'Costa 1990; Clooney 1990; Moltman 1990; Newbigin 1990; Pannenberg 1990). Several authors also expressed concern that the pluralist approach is as likely to lead Christians away from their faith as to enrich it (Cobb 1990; D'Costa 1990; Millbank 1990). As such, a key argument found in many of the essays was that as Christians, the best way to approach an interreligious encounter is to do so as a committed Christian who views the theological beliefs held by practitioners of other faiths through a firmly held Christian theological framework (Clooney1990;

D'Costa 1990; Newbigin 1990). They further contend that this inclusivist approach does not necessarily lead to the roadblock implied in many of the essays included in the Knitter/Hick text, rather it provides Christians with the confidence to engage others in a pro-active way. For example, the essay by D'Costa offers five theses to explain the bridging nature of the Trinitarian Christology and promotes it as the best model for Christians to negotiate interreligious encounters. D'Costa argues that Trinitarian Christology allows Christians to be both open to ideas found within other religious traditions as expressions of the Holy Spirit while at the same time recognizing those same expressions in their own Christian faith. While D'Costa does not endorse the pluralist approach, his particular inclusivist position is certainly close to the dividing line between the two as his fifth thesis contends that, "the church stands under the judgment of the Holy Spirit, and if the Holy Spirit is active in world religions, then the world religions are vital to Christian faithfulness" (D'Costa 1990, 22).

Debates about which approach is best suited for Christian encounters with the religious other is ongoing (a subject discussed further in chapter three). Although the exclusive/inclusive/pluralist model is an imperfect model for mapping Christian theological approaches to religious diversity, with references to Christian sectarian divisions revised and distribution of practitioners adjusted, it nonetheless provides a tool for understanding the spectrum of attitudes about religious diversity that can be found within many religious traditions. Islam is one example that is discussed next. Why Islam? Aside from Christians writing about approaches to the religious other, literature dedicated to negotiating Christian /Muslim and Muslim /religious other relations represents the largest body of literature dedicated to inter-religious relations. As well,

given that in the closing decades of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty-first century, Muslims have been implicated in several international acts of violence, the question of Muslims building better relations with the religious other has become a pressing one.

1.2.2. Muslims and the Religious Other

Like Surin above, Jacques Waardenburg provides a comprehensive overview of historical to present day responses to religious pluralism from an Islamic perspective (Waardenburg 1999). Using sacred texts, juridical literature, travel accounts, philosophical tracts and polemic literature, Waardenburg identifies characteristics of Muslim social attitudes about the religious other that have developed through the ages (ibid, 1-102).

In the early stages of the community (medieval period between 650 and 1500), references to non-Muslims "people of the book" or *Ahl al-Kitab* (Christians, Jews and, in some legal opinions, also Zoroastrians), were primarily apologetic in nature with sketchy references to the texts and/or doctrines of other faith communities. Waardenburg argued that the limited details of alternative religions suggests that the early encounters between Muslim scholars and other traditions were likely distant or fleeting (ibid, 18).

As the Muslim empire expanded and encounters with non-Muslims grew, references in the literature oscillated between polemic portraits and disinterested passing

accounts.[8] The polemic portraits tended to offer more detailed accounts of doctrines and practices but more often in a derogatory tone especially in comparison to the true message found in the Qur'an (ibid). Waardenburg claimed the disinterested accounts tended to view other religions as primitive, dying belief systems that had been superseded by Islam. In modern time, reaction has been mixed, mostly due to the fact that many Muslims associate Christianity with the best and worst of Western culture. Consequently, the literature written through this period reflects a range of attitudes with some Muslims supporting the idea of social evolution, including human rights and advancements in communication and technology, as a positive reflection of the Christian culture, while others support more traditional polemic or critical responses (ibid).

Since the 1950s, reaction to non-Muslims has become more aggressive, antagonistic and intolerant, especially toward Christians and Jews who are often associated with upholding the morally corrupt Western values of imperialism and materialism. In part the reaction stems from the political shift of many Muslim nations from Western governed colonies to the independent states, which have offered greater opportunity to voice criticism of Western imperialism (ibid).

As with Surin above, the historical portrait of shifts in attitudes of the religious other offered by Waardenburg is a general overview only that should not be confused with the spectrum of attitudes which have been present throughout history. Rather, his essays offer a pointed reminder of the importance of knowing the historical development of ideas and attitudes that one brings to encounters with the religious other.

[8] Waardenburg cites the following authors as key to the medieval period: Ibn Hazm (994-1064) as a polemic author and Al-Biīruūnīi (973-1050) for his descriptive and more objective study (Waardenburg 1999, 26-30).

To better understand the spectrum of contemporary attitudes about the religious other as expressed within Islam, Ekkehard Rudolph offers a helpful typology (Rudolph 1999). Rudolph examined a variety of publications published in Middle-Eastern and North African Muslim countries throughout the 1970s to early 1990s. His research recognized three distinct attitudes which guided the Muslim approach to their closest non-Muslims relatives – Christians and Jews. The approaches are as follows:

1) *The Qur'anic approach* – whereby Christians and Jews are considered "People of the Book" but that their revelation has been superseded by the message of the Qur'an. Dialogue is only possible if both Christians and Jews accept the truth of Islamic revelation.
2) *The ideological approach* – recognizes Christians and Jews as sharing a common goal to destroy Islam and as such dialogue is impossible.
3) *The irenic approach* – whereby Christians and Jews are recognized as monotheistic religions that are linked to Islam by common bases and interests, thus dialogue is both possible and necessary.

Rudolph 1999, 304

The Rudolph model of Muslim attitudes to pluralism reflects the Knitter model for Christian responses (see Table 7).

Table 7[9]
Typology of Muslim Approaches to Religious Pluralism base on Rudolph Study

Exclusive ----------Inclusive ----------Pluralist

Ideological Approach	**Qur'anic Approach**	**Irenic Approach**
One True Religion	Truth of Qur'an Supersedes Christian Revelation	Many Ways, One Norm
Exclusive – Harsh ideological response to Jews and Christians Dialogue for conversion purposes only	Inclusive – Disappointment in Christian denial of the Qur'an and Prophethood of Muhammad Dialogue between religious scholars only	Inclusive- It is God's will that "People of the Book" work for the common desire to strengthen religious values and moral principles in society and individual life Dialogue necessary
Location of texts in the Rudolph study		
Saudi Arabia	Egypt	Lebanon; Jordon

Less but Significant --------Most ----------Least
Number of Muslims

As with the Knitter model presented above, it is important to recognize the ideal nature of the categories and attitudes presented. Both are typologies only, with the purpose of understanding patterns in faith-based responses to the religious other only in the most general of terms. It is possible to meet individuals from faith communities or traditions who express attitudes that span the spectrum of those presented above. Nonetheless, the models provide baseline information for understanding and negotiating interreligious encounters with Muslims.

[9] Table 6 was compiled as a visual chart of the exclusive to pluralists models examined in the 1999 Ekkehard Rudolph text, "The Debate on Muslim-Christian Dialogue as Reflected in Muslim Periodicals in Arabic (1970-1991)".

1.3. Building Portraits of the Religious Other

Within religious communities, portraits of the religious other – be it from the same (intrareligious) or other religious traditions, are often based on partial knowledge of the other and constructed within the community itself, or without consultation or input from the religious community being portrayed. A call often heard from advocates for interfaith dialogue is that participants need to be open to learning about other religious traditions from the perspective of the practitioner at the table. For example, Mahmoud Ayoub, a Muslim practitioner, religious scholar and staunch advocate of interfaith dialogue, has often criticized Muslims in dialogue for holding too strongly to a Muslim perspective of Christianity based more on the Qur'an than from that offered by a Christian at the dialogue table (Ayoub 1995, 2004).

While expanded knowledge about the religious other is a clear ideal within the interfaith movement, local perceptions of the religious other are often based on information circulated within the community. For those living in a cosmopolitan urban environment, exposure to people of diverse faith traditions at work, play or in daily life offers an environment in contrast to that found in more homogenous communities where religious diversity may be limited more to what is projected from the television, movies or the online screen. However, while religious diversity is an ever-increasing reality globally, especially within urban centres, representations of the religious other too often focus on radicalized portraits which can foster what Douglas Cowan describes as sociophobic responses (Cowan 2008). Reviewing multiple case studies of both Canadian and international acts of violence in which Islamic groups where implicated, Cowan calls to task the role of media and political bodies for using sociophobic rhetoric that tends to

escalate perceptions of danger or fear of the religious other (ibid, 73). Cowan cites one Pakistani-Canadian reflection on questions asked of her after the 2006 'Toronto 18' terror plot. She was challenged by how many Canadians had "formed their conclusions [about what it is to be Muslim] based on sensationalized television coverage of grand-scale terror" (ibid, 71). Reliance on media portraits of religion is not limited to Canadians, but is symptomatic of the larger problem of religious illiteracy that has developed over the twentieth century.

1.4. The Problem of Religious Illiteracy

The problem of religious illiteracy has been on the radar of many scholars of religion examining shifts in the social authority of religion (Beckford 2011; Bibby 1993, 2002; Beyer 2000, 2003b; O'Toole 1996; Prothero 2007; Sweet 1997; Waardenberg 1999; Wuthnow 2005; Zebiri 2001). In Canada, Paul Bramadat and David Seljak have highlighted religious illiteracy as a significant issue (Bramadat and Seljak 2005, 2008; Bramadat 2009, 2011; Seljak, 2009). In the opening chapter of their 2005 text *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada*, Bramadat and Seljak identified four key observable shifts which have contributed to shifts in the social authority of religion in Canadian society and the growing issue of religious illiteracy. First, the Quiet Revolution in Quebec radically reduced the power of the Roman Catholic Church among the *Québécois* (weekly attendance rates dropped from the 1963 high of 88% to approximately 20% in 2001 (Bibby 2002, 73)). Second, sex scandals and abuse of Aboriginal children in residential schools managed by Christian institutions and leaders shook Canadians across

the country diminishing confidence in the role and social contribution of organized religion. Third, in this increasingly connected social reality, more and more Canadians are opting to meet their spiritual needs by looking outside traditional religious institutions or combining practices. And fourth, the move to a more liberal and multicultural society in which "the public sphere could not appear to favour *any* particular religion" (Bramadat and Seljak 2005, 4). This fourth shift – the shift to a religiously neutral political or government position - is most noticeable in the histories of several public social institutions that were formerly managed by Christian religious communities including education, social services and healthcare. This move has contributed to the further privatization of religion in Canada, which has in turn led to a severe reduction in the enculturation of Christian knowledge and values within Canadian society. As Bramadat and Seljak note, the fourth shift toward the privatization of religion or exclusion of religion from public discourse has produced "a kind of religious illiteracy the result of which is that Canadians are increasingly ignorant about world religions, including Christianity" (ibid, 5).

Several scholars examining Muslim approaches to the religious other also point to religious illiteracy as a significant deterrent to building good interfaith relations (Akbas 2001; Ayoub 2004; Duran 1992; Mariati 2004; Moussalli 1998; Nasr 1998; Siddiqui 1999; Sway 2003; Takim 2004; Waardenburg 1999; Zebiri 2001). Several authors noted that a common Muslim view of the Western world is that since the Enlightenment period, it has been evolving into a secular entity which has divorced itself from religion. Growth of religious illiteracy not only limits the general societal knowledge of Christian traditions or other religious faiths, but threatens the moral fabric of society. As Tabli

explained in his 1988 essay, within Muslim circles there is a significant discourse that criticizes Western civilization for corrupting humanity by promoting a godless society where materialism and permissive moral values reign, allowing for millions of child-mothers, homosexual marriages, adultery, and pornography promoted in advertising, on television and in films like "America Sex O'clock" (Tabli 1988,124). While the concern raised by Tabli may seem extreme, the apparent disregard of teaching about religion can interfere with the process of building respectful relations amongst people who follow distinct religious traditions and practises. When a society is disinterested in learning about or knowing their own Christian religious traditions and values, the potential interest for learning about non-Christian traditions is reduced (Hussain 2003).

The lack of knowledge or misinformation about the religious other tends to reinforce negative stereotypes. The need to counter religious illiteracy is a pressing one with calls for more public education about diverse religious traditions, beliefs and practices, to counter stereotypes and provide more balanced perspectives and approaches to religious diversity. Without accurate knowledge about diverse religious expressions and practices, ignorance or misinformation can lead to development of a dangerous fear of the religious other, thereby exacerbating tensions and stimulating conflicts. As Frederick Greensphan explained, "hostility is a sign of underlying insecurity, a sense not only of personal danger, but of religious uncertainty, with deep-seated social and psychological concerns masked by theological language" (Greensphan 1987, ix). However, in our efforts to learn more about the religious other it is prudent to remember the advice of Sallie King that religions are like language and are often not interchangeable, "something is always lost in translation" (King 2005, 99).

Scholars acknowledge the need for more accurate information about beliefs and values found within each religious tradition that will allow for better understanding not only of the differences but also of how much is shared across traditions (values of honesty, compassion, justice, community). For it is more often the shared elements which are called upon to bridge differences and build trust and respect for our shared humanity. However, this bridge building effort requires several tools.

1.5. Additional Tools

The 2005 text edited by Bramadat and Seljak offers an important Canadian example of how religious studies scholars provide tools for countering religious illiteracy or misrepresentations of religious traditions. In keeping with the roots of the field, scholars of religion have been and continue to be instrumental in providing educational tools for negotiating religious diversity. Unfortunately, too often those tools remain the purview of students enrolled in college or university elective courses in religion – a limited audience for sure. Of course, scholarship can and does make it into other social arenas including seminaries, religious communities and the offices of government leaders who are looking for tools to address issues related to religious diversity. However, given the "relentless secularization" of Canadian society (O'Toole 1996, 119), and that religion has "generally acquired [a] fragmentary, syncretic, consumerist character" (ibid:133), governments developing social policy dealing with religious diversity more often turn to political institutions for guidance.

A notable contribution for framing social policy has been the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), a document which has been instrumental in the development of charter of rights policies adopted by many nations the world over, including Canada.

Since its adoption in 1948, the UDHR has been widely promoted throughout the world and has provided a model for over two hundred "assorted declarations, conventions, protocols, treaties, charters and agreements, all dealing with the realization of human rights in the world" (Morsink 1999, 20). In particular, Article 18 holds governments accountable to ensuring the right to free expression of religious belief, practice, worship and observance (UDHR 1948). However, despite the UDHR directive and obvious growth in religious diversity, especially within Western secular driven social discourses, religion has become marginalized, relegated to the private realm - outside the public square, too often misrepresented and/or misunderstood.

More tools are required to better understand how to mediate the complex issues that religious diversity brings to the twenty-first century. Again, Bramadat reminds us that "the failure to take religion seriously and to think creatively as we imagine the shape the world will take in the next several decades has serious ramifications" (Bramadat 2009, 12-13).

Scholars and governments are not alone in the effort to think more imaginatively about religion in society. Over much of the twentieth century the modern interfaith

movement has become an important source of positive social capital [10] – both bonding and bridging – for negotiating religious diversity (Bramadat 2005; Pedersen 2004; Ammerman 2010). Eboo Patel, religious studies scholar and founder of the Chicago-based Interfaith Youth Core, sees interfaith engagement as the practical key for nurturing the alternative to interreligious conflict, and the theory of pluralism as the guide to support that engagement (Patel 2007, 5). For Patel, the theory of religious pluralism is distinct from those focused only on religious diversity in that the latter is more often used primarily as a descriptor for people of different religious backgrounds who coexist in close proximity, whereas religious pluralism:

> … is a form of proactive cooperation that affirms the identity of the constituent communities while emphasizing that the well-being of each, and all, depends on the health of the whole. It is the belief that the common good is best served when each [religious] community has a chance to make its unique contribution.
>
> Patel 2007, 5-6

To promote both the theory of pluralism and interfaith engagement, Patel cited a 2003 study by Ashutosh Varshney who examined sectarian violence in India and found that within cities where "networks of engagement" were promoted amongst people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, those networks served to prevent tensions from escalating into violence - "people knew each other well enough not to want to kill each other" (ibid). Such 'networks of engagement' are often found in what Robert Bellah called the "radicalized middle". In *Uncivil Religion,* Bellah argues that prejudice,

[10] Robert Putnam first introduced the concept of social capital in his celebrated 1995 text *Bowling Alone: Amercia's Declining Social Capital.* In the study, Putnam argued that there are two kinds of social capital: Bridging capital and Bonding capital. Bridging capital is best understood as the effort to build various social networks that span diverse social groups. Bonding capital refers to the deep relationships that develop as a result of prolonged and engaged involvement with a particular social network. Since the release of his study, Putnam's concept of social capital has been an important marker for sociologists of religion examining strategies for negotiating religious diversity.

discrimination and hostility toward others arise from a dialectic of boundaries defined by concepts of inclusion and exclusion (Bellah 1987, 219). In the case of interfaith relations, the radicalized middle is one in which an individual maintains a clear religious identity while also engaging in a deep and continuing relationship with what lies across the boundary (ibid, 223).

The path toward realizing such deep relations is grounded in dialogue, or as Frederick Bird explains "good conversations" (Bird 1996). As Bird explains, good conversations are "kinds of moral communications [which] typically take place in the company of others as people communicate back and forth over a period of time in unplanned as well as planned ways" (ibid, 204). Such conversations imply an engaged approach to building relations with the other, that seeks common ground and to maintain positive relations over time; they can be educational, foster trust and lead to joint actions that further deepen positive relations (ibid, 225-237).

The interfaith relationships built within the radicalized middle through good conversations can also contribute to the development of positive social capital by actively bridging diverse social groups and creating social bonds. As Corwin Smidt explained, the two key ingredients of social capital are trust and reciprocity (Smidt 2003, 5). In particular, Smidt argues that:

> …participation in voluntary associations fosters interactions between people and increases the likelihood that trust between members will be generated. Group activity helps to broaden the scope of an individual's interest, making public matters more relevant. In addition, it is argued that participation in organizations tends to increase member's level of information, trains them in social interaction, fosters leadership skills, and provides resources essential for effective public action (e.g., Verba, Scholzman, & Brady 1995).
>
> Smidt 2003, 6

When the voluntary association is religious, the social capital building is more durable given that those involved are often engaged in responding to a religious calling or religious duty to serve others (Ammerman 1997, 2005; Coleman 2003; Smidt 2003). As Nancy Ammerman explained, people learn that 'loving one's neighbor is not only functional, but pleasing to God …that giving alms is not just good for a tax write-off, but is a religious duty" (Ammerman 1997, 213).

1.6. The Interfaith Movement: Beacon of Hope?

It is the commitment to developing a place for open exchange, friendship and cooperation that is foundational to the modern interfaith movement. The interfaith movement demonstrates an important response to what Diana Eck suggested is the most important question in our contemporary world, that is "how to understand and negotiate religious difference in a world in which all of us now live together" (Eck 2003, 167). Eboo Patel pushes this aim further with his expressed hope that interfaith cooperation become a social norm, like environmentalism or civil rights (Filteau 2012; Patel 2007; Patel and Hartman 2009; Wood 2010). As he explained,

> Environmentalism has become a social norm – people doing everything from recycling to buying clean cars. Service learning has also become a social norm – every college campus in America has a large percentage of students engaged in volunteer efforts. Human rights are a social norm; so are civil rights.
>
> We'd like interfaith cooperation also to be a social norm. That means that mosques, synagogues, temples, churches and humanist societies should have interfaith exchanges and service projects just as a matter of course – just like having an Easter service or a Thanksgiving service. Such efforts should just become part of what your place of worship does. We think that every Sunday school, mosque school or Hebrew school should be teaching about how its

> tradition inspires positive human interaction. We think that everyone should stand up against religious prejudice in the way that people stand up against racial prejudice. If college campuses would adopt a set of hallmarks for interfaith cooperation, that would go a long way toward changing the culture.
>
> Patel quoted in Wood 2010, 33

Yet, Patel also acknowledges that interfaith cooperation has not as yet reached the level of social norm (Wood 2010). There continues to be a need to grow the interfaith movement, to encourage interfaith dialogue and outreach from the formal international level, to grassroots initiatives, to celebrate the work of individuals who have and continue to shape this new religious voice – to transcend divisions and promote the value religion brings to global society.

Such a mandate could situate the interfaith movement as a 'promise-driven' social movement (Koieczny, 2009). Social movement theory suggests social movements are defined by their capacity to mobilize resources (human and material), in support of initiating a change in social attitudes (Staggenborg 2008, 3). While most social movements are grievance-driven with the aim of changing social policy, promise-driven social movements aim at building social goods. Some social movement theorists might even identify the interfaith movement as a counter movement to radicalized religious conservatism or fundamentalism.

The interfaith movement has not been formally identified within social movement theory, likely due to its relatively small size. Nonetheless, the global interfaith movement meets several criteria for social movement status, including "the existence of thousands of groups and activities that are loosely related by a cluster of shared methods, aims, and values" (Pedersen 2004, 77). The effort to promote change in social attitudes about

religion has been present since the first World's Parliament of Religion in 1893, and pursued by several international to individual interfaith initiatives throughout the twentieth and into the twenty-first centuries.

One example of an initiative grounded within academic circles can be found in the efforts of Leonard Swidler, Professor of Catholic Thought at Temple University, who has dedicated his academic career to building tools for the interfaith movement. In 1964, with his wife Arlene Swidler, he launched the *Journal for Ecumenical Studies* (JES), as the "first peer-reviewed journal in the field of interreligious dialogue" (Dialogue Institute website 2010, History page). Like many initiatives within the interfaith movement, the efforts of Dr. and Mrs. Swidler followed a familiar trajectory of an early focus on ecumenical dialogue across diverse Christian traditions, which shifted to a focus on Christian-Jewish dialogue, followed by a more expansive study of interfaith dialogues which involved "a wide array of religious traditions" (ibid). In 1978, "as a companion arm to *JES*", Swidler established at Temple University the *Institute for Interreligious, Intercultural Dialogue*, with a specific focus on Abrahamic Trialogue (ibid). In 2008, the center was renamed *The Dialogue Institute* to reflect the expanded nature of the "pioneering efforts in interreligious dialogue" (ibid). The Dialogue Institute has over its thirty-year history provided a forum for scholars to explore interfaith relations and has developed a number of tools to guide individuals, religious communities and organizations in their efforts to establish interfaith dialogue initiatives. Alongside the ongoing scholarly trialogue process, the Dialogue Institute offers programs for both Temple University students and members of religious communities with a focus on interreligious training, Dialogue Institutes Network, and the Interreligious Literacy

Project (ibid, Programs page). Dr. Leonard Swidler has been a key force within the Dialogue Institute and recognized widely within interfaith circles as the author of the Dialogue Decalogue (see Figure 1), a document penned in 1978 which highlights ten "ground rules for Interreligious, Interideological dialogue" (ibid, Resources page). The *Decalogue* has become a key tool for many interreligious organizations. According to the Dialogue Institute website, it has been reproduced in thirty-nine publications in nine languages (ibid). The *Decalogue* has also been informally reproduced by many congregations interested in pursuing interfaith dialogue activities – from churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, to gurdwaras and beyond. For many who look to the *Decalogue* as a guide for negotiating interfaith dialogue, each point or 'commandment' is understood to be an ideal that can foster respectful engagement and lead to deeper understanding of all partners in dialogue (see Figure 1 – next page).

In addition to the *Decalogue*, Swidler has been instrumental in the development of additional dialogue tools including the "Seven Stages of Deep Dialogue" and a series of "Deep Dialogue Mantras" (ibid). These resources have become important tools for many lay-person and grassroots interfaith initiatives and all are often cited within literature or as important tools on websites produced by grassroots to formal interfaith organizations.

Figure 1
Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue

Dialogue in the interreligious, inter-ideological sense is a conversation on a common subject between people with differing views undertaken so that they can learn from one another and grow. The Dialogue Decalogue formulated by Prof. Leonard Swidler sets forth the ground rules for dialogue.

FIRST COMMANDMENT

The essential purpose of dialogue is to learn, which entails change. At the very least, to learn that one's dialogue partner views the world differently is to effect a change in oneself. Reciprocally, change happens for one's partner as s/he learns about oneself.

SECOND COMMANDMENT

Dialogue must be a two-sided project: both between religious/ideological groups, and within religious/ideological groups (Inter- and Intra-). Intra-religious/ideological dialogue is vital for moving one's community toward an increasingly perceptive insight into reality.

THIRD COMMANDMENT

It is imperative that each participant comes to the dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity. This means not only describing the major and minor thrusts as well as potential future shifts of one's tradition, but also possible difficulties that s/he has with it.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT

One must compare only her/his ideals with their partner's ideals, and her/his practice with their partner's practice. Not their ideals with their partner's practice.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Each participant needs to describe her/himself. For example, only a Muslim can describe what it really means to be an authentic member of the Muslim community. At the same time, when one's partner in dialogue attempts to describe back to them what they have understood of their partner's self-description, then such a description must be recognizable to the described party.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT

Participants must not come to the dialogue with any preconceptions as to where the points of disagreement lie. A process of agreeing with their partner as much as possible, without violating the integrity of their own tradition, will reveal where the real boundaries between the traditions lie: the point where s/he cannot agree without going against the principles of their own tradition.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Dialogue can only take place between equals, which means that partners learn from each other—*par cum pari* according to the Second Vatican Council—and do not merely seek to teach one another.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

Dialogue can only take place on the basis of mutual trust. Because it is persons, and not entire communities, that enter into dialogue, it is essential for personal trust to be established. To encourage this it is important that less controversial matters are discussed before dealing with the more controversial ones.

NINTH COMMANDMENT

Participants in dialogue should have a healthy level of criticism toward their own traditions. A lack of such criticism implies that one's tradition has all the answers, thus making dialogue not only unnecessary, but unfeasible. The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, which is impossible if one's tradition is seen as having all the answers.

TENTH COMMANDMENT

To truly understand another religion or ideology one must try to experience it from within, which requires a "passing over," even if only momentarily, into another's religious or ideological experience.

Source: website of the Dialogue Institute. Accessed January 15, 2010.

An example of a more recent interfaith organization with roots both within and beyond the academy is the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (TBFF). Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and committed Roman Catholic, in 2008 leveraged his high-profile international reputation to establish the faith foundation which bears his name and works towards the goal of providing "practical ways in which people can be open-minded, informed about the great impact of faith in the world, learn from and connect with those of other faiths and work together on common challenges and conflicts in the pursuit of sustainable peace" (TBFF website 2012, About). The TBFF has a three-fold program which provides resources in support of dialogue efforts from scholarly to grassroots levels. The "Faith and Globalization Initiative" (FGI), is a scholarly endeavour focused on providing policy advice, research and analysis of the impact of religion in a globalized world to the next generation of political leaders (ibid, FGI page). The FGI has built a network of international universities including Yale (US), Peking University (China) and McGill University (Canada) (ibid). The "Face to Faith" project is focused on building educational programs for 12-17 year olds. The TBFF supports teacher training in dialogue techniques used within the classroom to promote cross-cultural understanding (ibid, Face to Face). The third key project of the TBFF is the "Faith Acts" project which encourages people of faith to "take action towards the [United Nations] Millennium Development Goals, in particular, the one focused on eliminating deaths from malaria" (ibid, Faiths Act). In 2013, the program claims to have engaged more than one thousand faith communities in the effort that has collectively contributed 17,580 hours of interfaith service and raised over £ 285,000 (ibid).

Although these two examples are far-reaching international interfaith organizations, the interfaith movement includes a full spectrum of initiatives. From small informal dialogue circles to international parliaments, people from religious traditions the world over have been together building tools for understanding, acceptance and celebration of religious diversity as a normal and valuable contribution to contemporary life. As one Canadian interviewee explained, "knowing more about the religious other is one small step toward peace – to paraphrase Neil Armstrong, interfaith work is one small step for humans and a leap for humanity" (Interview Vancouver). Another interviewee also praised interfaith work as providing the opportunity to not only humanize the other, but to "learn from each other and expand one's sense of self" (Interview Montreal). Others see interfaith as fulfilling a more urgent need to dismantle the fence around God and to "vigorously oppose the denigrating of one religion in order to promote another" (Alexander 1995, 172). A small but growing voice, particularly among youth and those who self-identify as spiritual-but-not-religious (SBNR), claim interfaith "to be my new religion" (Interviews Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver). Others are less optimistic and wonder if the interfaith movement has peaked, citing too many initiatives focused on preaching to the converted. Likewise some suggest that many interfaith activities are 'too safe', 'holding to platitudes' instead of taking the risks required to address the real distinctions, and conflicts, between traditions that have not or possibly cannot be bridged (Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

Such comments raise questions about the role interfaith work has in meeting the aim of negotiating positive relations with the religious other. How has the global interfaith movement grown since 1893? Who is participating and why? What tools or

approaches for bridging religious diversity have been developed within the interfaith movement? What issues or challenges need to be addressed for further growth within the movement? What can scholars and participants tell us about the development of this new religious voice? These questions are examined in the following chapters.

PART TWO – THE GLOBAL INTERFAITH MOVEMENT

For many who participate in and/or study interfaith activities, the 1893 meeting of the World Parliament of Religions (WPR) marks the beginning of the modern global interfaith movement. Since the 1893 WPR, numerous figures and events have contributed to the development of various formal and informal interfaith encounters and exchanges that have shaped the global interfaith movement into the twenty-first century.

Part two offers a profile of the modern global interfaith movement that draws from a range of scholarly and practitioner perspectives which contribute to collective knowledge of the development and growth of this contemporary religious phenomenon. As mentioned in the introduction, in keeping with the grounded theory approach, this part works with the corpus of texts and online materials to examine and analyze key themes identified through the Canadian fieldwork research portion of the study also found within the modern global interfaith movement. When relevant, participant quotes open the discussion of each theme. Given this approach, the works of a few authors are represented in several chapters as their voice and research touches upon multiple themes. Authors of note include Marcus Braybrooke (1993), Patrice Brodeur (2003, 2005, 2006), Diana Eck (2003), Sallie King (1998, 2011), Kate McCarthy (1998, 2007), Peggy Morgan (1995), and Kusumita Pedersen (1998, 2004). Each chapter closes with a summary of essential observations and analysis of key contributions these sources bring to the understanding of each theme. The key themes/chapters include:

Chapter Two – Development, History and Voices of the Global Interfaith Movement
Chapter Three – Interfaith Activities: Motivations, Approaches and Types
Chapter Four – Building Relations, Challenges and Going Forward

Before going forward I offer a few observations about the literature reviewed as sources for better understanding the character and development of the global interfaith movement. One caveat is that materials referenced have been limited to articles, books, online resources, etc. that are available only in English, with a few exceptions for French publications within Canada. That is, while the material reviewed was extensive and touched on many voices found in the contemporary discourse about the global interfaith movement, the restriction to English language texts has necessarily excluded practitioner and scholarly voices offered in other languages. As such, this profile of the global interfaith movement emphasizes developments within mostly English speaking countries with a few exceptions.

As publication dates attest, most texts examined in this part are focused on developments within the modern interfaith movement and were written in the closing decades of the twentieth and the early twenty-first century. This may reflect, in part, the exponential growth of interfaith initiatives in recent decades. Database searches for scholarly writings about "interfaith", "interreligious" and "multifaith" subjects garnered limited results. In particular, prior to the 1970s the majority of listed studies were focused on issues related to interfaith marriages, where "interfaith" most often referred to relations between different Christian expressions – for example, Protestant and Catholic marriages – relations that today would be more often described as ecumenical not interfaith.

Searches using the term "multifaith" had no results prior to 1970 with growth in use of the term only noticeable from the mid-1990s. As Pedersen explained, this may reflect a shift in interfaith work from the formal scholar-based dialogue that marked activity up to

the 1990s, to more grassroots initiatives that focus on social justice activity where personal 'faith' and religious duty are important motivators for participation (Pedersen 2004, 77).

A telling stage of development in literature about the interfaith movement is found in the 1993 annotated bibliography edited by John Berthrong (Berthrong 1993). *Interfaith Dialogues: An Annotated Bibliography* includes a list of 156 books and fifteen journals published between 1964 and 1992. Berthrong explained that while the bibliography was not exhaustive, the compilation clearly focused on literature produced by Christian theologians and formal Christian institutions including "the Roman Catholic Church, The World Council of Churches and various [Christian] denominations of the North Atlantic world" (Berthrong 1993, 3). Berthrong justified his selection with the understanding that readers of the bibliography will "probably be Christians in North America", and that information with a Christian focus would be most useful for entering into dialogue with the religious other (ibid). Since the mid-1990s there have been more diverse religious voices added to the discourse – scholarly and participant perspectives, although contributions by Christians and Christian theologians maintain significant representation in the majority of texts.

Unlike Berthrong whose bibliography mostly included texts about interfaith dialogue from the perspective of a specific religious tradition or religious institution (i.e., Christian), this survey kept such texts to a minimum. That is, while texts that offer reflections on interfaith work from a specific faith tradition were consulted and represented in this profile, there was a concerted effort to review resources focused on interfaith organizations, practices and related activities.

Most resources included in this portrait are best described as offering an "emic" or insider perspective in that they were produced by individuals engaged in interfaith initiatives. It is important to note that the emic perspective does not detract from the value of information these resources contribute to our knowledge about interfaith organizations and initiatives, for many authors are also respected historians, religious studies scholars or scholars within their respective faith traditions. In fact, it is expected that participants would be most interested in and committed to recording developments within the movement, to celebrate the history and successes to date and to encourage growth in the future. Although some may be guilty of presenting overly optimistic portraits and there is often room for further critical analysis of the impact of the movement to date, these resources provide foundational data critical to tracking the development of this new religious voice.

Within the survey there is also a body of material which reflects an "etic" or observer/outsider perspective. These resources tend to focus on how government, para-government and non-governmental organizations work with interfaith committees to respond to various social concerns related to the increasing religious diversity found within many nations around the world.

CHAPTER TWO: DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORY OF THE GLOBAL INTERFAITH MOVEMENT

Following a mostly chronological publication order, this chapter offers reflection on how select authors have contributed to our collective knowledge of both the histories and development of the global interfaith movement since the first World Parliament of Religion in 1893. The first section offers a descriptive account of information available from selected texts and online resources. Each highlights a unique voice or source for understanding the historical development of the global interfaith movement and includes analysis of the key issues raised or omitted. The second section of the chapter works with both resources discussed and with others included in this survey to provide an overview of five distinct phases of development of the interfaith movement, including a discussion about demographic, social and technological characteristics that mark the development of this religious voice.

2.2. Emic Perspectives

Texts included in this first section offer a primarily emic perspective.

2.1.1. Pilgrimage of Hope: One Hundred Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue (1992)

Marcus Braybrooke offers the most detailed history of official interfaith organizations established in the period between 1893 and 1992. The 368-page text *Pilgrimage of Hope* is divided into eight parts with thirty-three chapters that provide

profiles of more than twenty key interfaith organizations which have shaped the interfaith movement throughout the twentieth century. Some organizations are given more attention than others. For example part one includes four chapters focused on profiling the first World Parliament of Religion held in Chicago in 1893. The sixteen-day World Parliament of Religions was one of the most celebrated activities at the Chicago World's Fair. Upwards of 10,000 people attended many of the public lectures especially those that included presentations by Swami Vivekananda who for many provided the first encounter with a person who lived as a Hindu. As Braybrooke explains the objective of the WPR was to "unite all religion against all irreligion; to make the Golden Rule the basis of this union; (and) to present to the world… the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the religious life" (Braybrooke 1992, 13).

Braybrooke provides detailed information about the key organizers (John Henry Barrows, Charles Carroll Bonney, and the Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones – all of whom spent formative years involved with the YMCA and the Christian Student Volunteer Movement[11]). Drawing from a record of letters distributed to religious leaders and scholars worldwide and responses received, Braybrooke provides a portrait of the consultation process that shaped the lead up to the WPR. The account also offers an overview of issues/concerns addressed in the more than 200 papers presented during the sixteen-day event including calls for all religious people to recognize: our "common humanity"; to build a "religious Brotherhood"; to organize additional congresses between

[11] The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) was established in 1844 and the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (SVM) in 1886. The youth movement of the late eighteenth century sponsored the development of many who became leaders in both ecumenical and interfaith initiatives of the early twentieth century. For example more than 4/5 of the first delegates to the World Council of Churches (WCC) had begun their ecumenical endeavours through the YMCA, YWCA or the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions (Rouse, 1967: 327).

religion and science; to recognize a "new spirit of peace and light"; and the call for all religious people to "make war on the giant evils that afflict mankind" (ibid, 19-25), all themes that have been key motivators for subsequent interfaith initiatives (discussed in more detail in chapter three).

Braybrooke also discusses details about the various religions represented at the WPR, highlighting the impact Christians had on the overall event (ibid, 27-38). Of the more than two hundred papers presented, one hundred and fifty-two were presented by Christians (one hundred and one from USA; forty from Britain, Canada and Continental Europe; eleven Christians were from South Asian congregations or from Eastern Orthodox traditions). The majority of Christians were split almost evenly between evangelical and non-evangelical Protestant denominations with Catholic involvement limited to a dozen papers. Catholic involvement was described as "enthusiastic but cautious" (ibid, 28). Braybrooke explains that the emphasis on diverse Christian denominations as prominent players in this interfaith initiative was seen as a significant event which contributed to the subsequent development of Christian ecumenical dialogues which ultimately led to the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 (ibid).

Non-Christian representation at WPR was limited. The few Jews who presented were members of the Reform denomination. There were twelve Buddhists in attendance who travelled from Siam, Ceylon and Japan. Although the number of Hindu participants was quite small with only eight attending, Hindus had the greatest non-Christian impact on the event, especially the 'exotic' Swami Vivekananda whose sessions were often over capacity (ibid, 32). There was only one Muslim – Mohammed Alexander, an American

convert. Despite the conference location in the USA, there were no representatives from Black Christian denominations. Involvement by women and youth was also limited (ibid).

The closing chapter of the section dedicated to the World Parliament of Religion offers one of the few examples in the book where Braybrooke reflects on the success of an interfaith organization. In this case, Braybrooke acknowledges that the over-representation of Christians contributed to an attitude of Christian triumphalism. He also noted that the WPR failed to establish an effective continuing organization for the interfaith movement. Instead, the WPR is recognized as having had a positive contribution to efforts within the Christian ecumenical dialogue movement and was the springboard for Catholic-Protestant-Jewish dialogue in the United States (ibid, 39-41).

Additional sections in *Pilgrimage*, offer extensive profiles of several key organizations that continue today including the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF est. 1900), World Congress of Faiths (WCC est. 1936), Temple of Understanding (TOU est. 1960), and the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP est. 1970 – now Religions for Peace). Braybrooke provides limited profiles of many smaller organizations including those dedicated to building peace and those engaged in bilateral dialogues (Jews and Christians; Christians and Muslims; Christians and Hindus). Although the account references dialogue initiatives spear-headed by Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus, Theosophists, Unitarians and Baha'is, the focus is primarily on interfaith activities initiated by Christian interests. Braybrooke also offers a brief discussion about the limited to non-existent invitation for involvement of new religious movements due to the challenges such expressions pose given they are often

viewed with "much suspicion" (ibid, 277). One section is dedicated to the role of academics as agents for fostering greater awareness of religious diversity and included a call for scholars to be more engaged within interfaith initiatives and the establishment of centres dedicated to interfaith education and research. The final section examined efforts by various interfaith groups the world over to develop the agenda for the second meeting of the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1993, one hundred years after the first meeting.

The text closes with a short part entitled "Conclusions" (8 pages), in which Braybrooke offers a few analytical statements about the interfaith movement. As may be expected, the observations were quite positive and hopeful, identifying the good works achieved and yet to be achieved by the various organizations and initiatives described in the book. Also discussed was a key debate within the interfaith movement regarding the question of whether a centralized interfaith organization should be established. Braybrooke suggests such an effort is not desirable as each organization has "its own constituency and its own special vocation" (ibid, 314). However, he did acknowledge that to avoid the ever-increasing competition for limited resources and members (an issue that continues to be voiced), the movement could benefit from establishing a more permanent and effective networking structure which would strengthen the "mechanisms for co-ordination and co-operation, both between interfaith organizations themselves and between such organizations and the agencies for dialogue of the religious communities" (ibid). Braybrooke closes with the recommendation that such an initiative would be increasingly necessary for the long-standing success of the movement. As is discussed

further below, there has been some progress toward this goal with the internet providing an important tool for sharing resources and building an interfaith network.

Overall, the text *Pilgrimage of Hope* provides the most comprehensive history of formal interfaith organizations founded throughout the twentieth century. Most of these organizations continue to operate in 2013, albeit some have had to scale back their efforts due to limited financial and volunteer resources (e.g., recent transformations of programming undertaken by the Temple of Understanding).

As mentioned in the opening comments, this text like others, offers an "emic" or practitioner perspective in that Marcus Braybrooke is an Anglican parish priest who has been an active participant in interfaith initiatives for more than forty years including stints as the President of the World Congress of Faiths, Co-Founder of the Three Faiths Forum, and as patron of the International Interfaith Centre (Bharat 2007, 59). Perhaps this emic perspective is responsible for the positive veneer of the portraits included with little to no commentary about conflicts within organizations, limited size and outreach of each and no discussion about who isn't involved – specifically representatives from conservative or orthodox expressions from most of the world religious traditions (including Christianity), ethnic Christians, Indigenous traditions, women and youth. While Braybrooke includes brief statements about the positive impact interfaith activities have on participants themselves, there is no discussion about how the experience of those individuals are shared with or received by their individual faith communities. The text also highlights the prominent role Christians (and men) play in each interfaith organization. It was and continues to be the case that in most interfaith organizations one will find official representatives from several denominations of Christianity – especially

appointments from Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, various United Church groupings, some orthodox traditions, and Unitarians. Whereas more often than not, individual members who profess Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, or other religious identities often clearly state that they represent only themselves, not all within their tradition or even denomination. The question of religious representation in formal dialogue has been and continues to be an issue for many interfaith initiatives, especially those in which Christian participants were appointed by their respective institutions.

Braybrooke also offered little insight about the inequitable representation of ethnic Christians, Indigenous traditions, women and youth within interfaith organizations, a dilemma raised in part by several authors as an important challenge for the interfaith movement (Brodeur 2005; King (U) 1998; King (S) 2011; Pedersen 2004). As well, other than identifying Swami Vivekananda as an 'exotic' participant in the World Parliament of Religion (1893), Braybrooke missed the opportunity to discuss the influence of curiosity about the 'exotic' religious other as a motivator for participation in interfaith initiatives. As interviewees and other texts attest, for many Western Christians, interfaith initiatives have provided the opportunity for first encounters with the religious other (McCarthy 2007; Pedersen 2004; Interviews Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

Pilgrimage tends to focus on global initiatives with little to no discussion about grassroots activities. However, such focus may say more about the nature of the movement up to the early 1990s. While grassroots efforts did exist in localized communities (i.e., urban centres), they were more often than not chapter groups of regional or national governing bodies of international organizations. For example, the World Council of Religions for Peace (WCRP) is an international organization with

offices or governing bodies in many nations around the world (primarily Western), to which chapter groups from specific urban or regional areas would look for guidance or support of local projects. Perhaps due to his geographic location in England, most of the smaller initiatives discussed were about activities within England with little to no mention made of interfaith initiatives in Europe, United States, Australia, Canada, Africa, the Middle East, India or along the Pacific Rim. Except for a short discussion about interfaith conflict in Israel, little was said about violent confrontations between religious communities outside general statements or accounts of interfaith efforts to promote peace. As well, there was an absence of any discussion about the growth of religious fundamentalism and more conservative, exclusive leaning religious expressions that were certainly present on the global stage at the time of publication. Despite the strong emphasis on Christian participation, there was also little to no discussion about the theology of pluralism or the tripartite model of exclusive/inclusive/pluralistic approaches to the religious other.

In assessing the text it is important to remember its place in history, the early 1990s: global migration had changed the religious landscape of many Western nations with visible growth of many non-Christian religious communities; the Berlin Wall was dismantled in 1989 calling to an end the Cold War. Each contributed to a new confidence in building world community. It was also written before the second meeting of the World Parliament of Religion held in 1993, a pivotal point for many who were engaged in interfaith activities at the time, and ultimately the inspiration for the development of what became numerous interfaith initiatives especially at the grassroots level. The 1993 WPR became the watermark of the contemporary phase of the interfaith

movement as subsequent texts from this review demonstrate. In all, as the title suggests, *Pilgrimage of Hope: 100 Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue,* offers an optimistic yet comprehensive baseline descriptive account of the historical developments of important key interfaith organizations over the first one hundred years of the movement.

2.1.2. World Council of Churches (1977 and 1979)

In 1948, after almost 40 years in the making, one of the most significant ecumenical achievements in Christianity was born – the World Council of Churches (WCC). The WCC was born from the ecumenical desires of the mostly Protestant interdenominational working committees of the International Missionary Council, the World Conference on Faith and Order and the World Conference on Life and Work (Rouse, 1967b: 613-620). Each working committee included representatives across the spectrum of Protestant traditions (Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Baptists, Evangelical, Pentecostal) and many Eastern Orthodox Churches. The Roman Catholic Church did not participate in WCC activities until well after Vatican II, in the 1960s.

Key to the success of the WCC was the introduction of an organizational structure that emphasized formal representation from each member church or organizations. The shift from individual representation to institutional membership resulted in greater commitment from all member churches to formally work towards the ecumenical ideal. Each committee worked within a formal communication structure whereby individual representatives would be invited to prepare statements that would be circulated to all

participants prior to an international conference meeting. At the meeting additional papers on a given subject would be presented, after which smaller discussion groups would be formed. The final large group dialogue provided the opportunity to draft outlines of official statements to publish and circulate more widely. The elaborate communication structure resulted in clear links between the three working groups from the local to regional, national and international levels, and also empowered individual churches to participate fully in the realization of ecumenical unity (Rouse, 1967b: 613-620).

Although the key mission of the WCC has been to continue with efforts to build strong ecumenical relations amongst member churches, there have been several interfaith dialogue initiatives since the early 1970s. The WCC has most often been the lead dialogue partner providing institutional support from coordination of meetings to production of formal publications or statements about the experiences.

For example, the World Council of Churches published what have become two important resources for formal interfaith initiatives that involve Christians.

The first, *Christians Meeting Muslims: WCC Papers on Ten Years of Christian-Muslim Dialogue (1966-1976),* includes papers produced as the result of formal dialogue meetings between delegates from the World Council of Churches sub-committee on Dialogue of People of Living Faiths and Ideologies and selected individuals of Muslim heritage who hail from Muslim majority nations including Cartigny (1969), Ajaltoun (1970), Broumana (1972), Colombo (1974), Legon (1974), and Hong Kong (1975 - primarily South-East Asian Muslims) (WCC 1977, 1). Each paper provides an account of

discussions by participants on subjects ranging from traditional perspectives on revelation, shared community, mission and *da'wah* (Islamic witnessing). Each paper also reflects a high-degree of optimism for developing interfaith relations. The optimism is likely due to this being one of the first known efforts within Western contemporary Christian history in which Christians approached Muslims with the intention to engage in a respectful exchange, to counter false impressions and to learn more about Islam from the perspective of a practising Muslim. As Dr. D. C. Mulder, then Moderator of the sub-unit for Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, explained in his opening statement to the book "when compared to a history of many, many centuries of tensions, these ten years show a remarkable development, a new spirit of cooperation, a real effort towards mutual understanding" (ibid, vi). The statement was followed by his call for ongoing effort given the realization that "ten years is a short period and that the sapling of dialogue is still very tender and continually in danger of being uprooted" (ibid). In general the groups that met throughout this period were limited in size averaging between eighteen and thirty individuals. Attempts would be made to ensure the representation from each faith was equitable but that ideal was not always met. Several papers noted that these official meetings were not to take away from less formal dialogues taking place at the grassroots level, rather, such efforts were strongly encouraged. The opening comments to the book also suggested that the memoranda of WCC dialogue guidelines proved to be a helpful resource "not only for pursuing and deepening their existing dialogues but have provided a catalyst for starting new dialogues at various levels extending from theological reflection to practical collaboration" (ibid, 2).

The results of the Christian-Muslim dialogues may have contributed to the fine tuning of the WCC memoranda for dialogues in the second text entitled *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies.* This text was produced in 1979 and is divided into three parts with several subtitled sections which demonstrate the formal approach to dialogue adopted by the WCC.

1) ON COMMUNITY:
    a. Communities and the Community of Humankind
        i. with 8 articles describing various characteristics that define a community
    b. The Christian Community: The Churches and the Church
        i. with 7 articles describing various characteristics that define the Christian community
2) ON DIALOGUE
    a. Reasons for Dialogue
        i. Four articles describing various reasons for dialogue including the "dialogue in community", dialogue as lifestyle, dialogue as a fundamental part of Christian service within community, dialogue is not in conflict to giving of witness if entered into with a commitment to the teachings of Jesus Christ.
    b. The Theological Significance of People of Other Faiths and Ideologies
        i. Four articles citing theological imperatives for respecting non-Christians and to dialogue with them. Article 22 also includes a statement about the need to address internal theological problems of church unity as well.
    c. Syncretism
        i. Six articles highlighting the potential risks of dialogue and the need for participants to enter with a firm understanding of their faith tradition, to avoid being evoked by mutual suspicion.
3) GUIDELINES RECOMMENDED TO THE CHURCHES FOR STUDY AND ACTION
    a. Learning and Understanding in Dialogue
        i. Five directives for establishing dialogue formats including the directive to search out dialogue partners, plan dialogues together, examine localized expressions of each faith, to allow each partner to define themselves, and generate educational efforts that will extend to each faith community and beyond.

b. Sharing and Living Together in Dialogue
    i. Five directives for engaging in "living dialogues, that is actions that are beneficial to not only members of the faith communities involved but to the betterment of society at large.
c. Planning for Dialogue
    i. Three directives for planning dialogues that include outreach to ecumenical partners wherever possible, to adapt guidelines to specific needs, for dialogue participants to also participate or network with larger national and international interfaith meetings and organizations.

WCC 1979, ii-iii

What is striking about both WCC texts is the very formal structured nature of each. Both reflect strategies employed within ecumenical initiatives that shaped the World Council of Churches. That is, prior to meeting prepared draft statements were circulated among members. At the meeting, the papers are debated and revised until consensus is reached and the final statement is endorsed by all. This follows a long tradition of orthodoxy within both Catholic and Protestant theological traditions which emphasises establishing a clear definition of terms within which all members can work together. Both texts in large measure serve to heighten teachings in support of respectful engagement with non-Christians as an important theology for all Christians to embrace. For example, in *Guidelines*, there is reference to the Gospel of Matthew teaching "Happy are those who work for peace: God will call them His Children" (Matthew 5:9). Likewise, both texts recognize that past conflicts and exclusive views have been part of the histories of both Muslim and Christian communities. However, participants viewed this new dialogue opportunity as not the time to dwell on the past but for looking forward and to build respectful relationships with one another (WCC 1979, 2). In *Pilgrimage,* Braybrooke touched upon such sentiments as being a common approach of many formal

interfaith dialogues that occurred throughout the period from the 1960s to the 1990s. This may be due in part to the fact that for many, these interfaith dialogues were the first occasion in which participants actually met individuals from another faith tradition with the intention of meeting them as fellow human beings within divine creation.

Despite the formalist approach and obvious optimism of each text, both have provided a foundation for further formal and informal interfaith dialogues. In particular, the directives offered in *Guidelines* have been often cited as being especially helpful for many grassroots church-based interfaith initiatives. Roman Catholics have likewise had access to dialogue guidelines since 1981 as outlined in the Vatican published *Guidelines for Dialogue Between Christians and Muslims,* which highlights many of the same themes outlined by the WCC (Borrmans 1981).

2.1.3. Sourcebook of the World's Religions: An Interfaith Guide to Religion and Spirituality (2000)

The text *Sourcebook of the World's Religions: An Interfaith Guide to Religion and Spirituality*, had its genesis in parting conversations by participants of the 1993 World Parliament of Religions meeting where often the question was asked 'what shall we do now?' (Beversluis 2000, ix). The text is divided into four parts:

Part One: Who Are We?
Part Two: Becoming a Community of Religions
Part Three: Choosing our Future
Part Four: Selected Resources for the Community of Religions

The four parts organize the thirty chapters of content with contributions from more than seventy authors. Most chapters include several short essays or statements, and excerpts from external sources. The editor, Joel Beversluis, an affiliate researcher with the Harvard Pluralism Project, was author, co-author or compiler of more than twenty entries. The detailed four-page Table of Contents suggests a desire of the editor for the text to be used as a reference book by its readers. In many respects the text serves this purpose, however, in quite general to superficial terms.

For example, "Part One: Who Are We?", includes nineteen chapters each of which is dedicated to providing a portrait of the living religious tradition of the author. All the major world religions are included (Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism). There are also a number of the smaller and /or marginalized religious portraits included (e.g., African Traditional Religions, Baha'i, First People and Native Traditions, Humanism, the Unification Church, Wicca and Nature Spirituality). The Unitarian Universalist Church (UUC) is given its own chapter in the book where the author Rev. David A. Johnson describes the UUC as a distinct faith tradition that attracts liberal Christians and is loosely affiliated with Protestantism. The inclusion of the UCC as a distinct faith tradition is interesting given an ongoing debate within some interfaith initiatives concerned with overrepresentation of Christians at the table and question whether Unitarian Universalists should be recognized as a distinct religious expression or as a denomination within Christianity.

While the reach is broad with many religions and distinct expressions of traditions included, most essays or statements are limited to only a few pages offering only a

cursory account. For example, the chapter on Christianity is sixteen pages and includes essays on the origins, beliefs, family tree, selected scriptures, African-American Christianity, Native American-Christian worship and call for Evangelical Renewal. The chapter dedicated to Judaism was four pages, with Shintoism covered in three pages and Taoism explained on just one page. The limited space allowed for simplistic accounts of specific holidays or platitudes about the moral teaching found within each tradition.

Part Two: Becoming a Community of Religions, speaks to the desire of interfaith participants for a universal acceptance of the interfaith ideals of "understanding and mutual respect, religious freedom, and the goal of peace through religiously motivated ethics" (ibid, 123). Each chapter of this part speaks to various approaches and motivations for engaging in the building of an interfaith community and includes reprints of popular guidelines and approaches to dialogue including "The Deep-Dialogue Decalogue" by Dr. Leonard Swidler and the Global Dialogue Institute, "A Grassroots Model" by Dr. Lillian Sigal, "A Definition of Terms" by the Association of Interfaith Ministers, "Towards a Global Ethic" by the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and "Toward a Global Spirituality" by Dr. Patricia M. Mische. As with the tradition portraits in part one, the documents exude optimism for the potential of interfaith to bridge the historical divides with little to no critical reflection about the challenges that accompany such ambition.

The last chapter of Part Two entitled, "Spirituality and Community", includes several essays that speak to one thread within the interfaith movement which promotes a shared universal spirituality or sacredness that supersedes all religious boundaries. Essay titles and authors include:

"Exploring Spirituality" (Laurence)
"Toward a Global Spirituality" (Mische)
"Global Spiritualties" (Beversluis)
"Sacred Community at the Dawn of the Second Axial Age" (Teasedale)
"The Cosmology of Religions and the Sacred Story of the Universe" (Berry)
"The Universal Understanding of Spirituality and Mysticism" (Teasdale)
"The World House" (Beversluis)

This pluralist position reflects an oft-quoted Rumi verse that "the lamps are different but the light is the same – it comes from beyond" (Hick 2005, 11). It is important to note that the universal spirituality position is not embraced by all within the interfaith movement. In particular, as discussed in chapter one above, those who hold more closely to an inclusivist position criticize the "universal" interpretation as an attempt to dismiss or water-down the distinct characteristics found within each religious tradition. That such universalist sentiments were highlighted in this text suggests the subject is an nonetheless important motivator within the movement.

Part Three: "Choosing Our Future", provides a series of case studies of various interfaith initiatives and approaches and one chapter with very practical guidance for how to implement interfaith actions. The last part, "Selected Resources for the Community of Religions", includes over seventy pages with contact information for literally hundreds of interfaith organizations and internet resources. In contrast to the emphasis in *Pilgrimage* on interfaith activities in Great Britain, within *Sourcebook* the overwhelming majority of the more than six hundred organizations listed were located in the United States with only a couple of dozen listings of Canadian organizations and fewer than one dozen international organizations.

Like the previous texts, *Sourcebook* provides another emic portrait of the interfaith movement. While the list of contributors includes a number of scholars of religion, as Beversluis explains early in his introduction "the authors of nearly all the essays in Part One have written not as official representatives, nor as disinterested specialists (though most of them are scholars), but as committed participants within the traditions they describe" (Beversluis 2000,1). The text focus is primarily on initiatives developed throughout the 1990s and offers only a few articles about the history of the interfaith movement directing interested readers to look to other more comprehensive sources including *Pilgrimage* by Braybrooke. The several brief portraits (2-8 paragraphs) of interfaith organizations offered in Part Three were limited to multifaith initiatives only. That is, there were no portraits of specific religious organizations that promote interfaith dialogue (bilateral or multilateral), e.g., the World Council of Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, specific Jewish or Muslim efforts, etc. This may suggest the intention of the authors to highlight the successes of united interfaith initiatives, leaving the accounts of specific religious communities to other publications.

The call for further education and outreach was a common theme throughout the text and reflects many of the interfaith activities of the period. As Braybrooke indicated in *Pilgrimage,* a common theme in *Sourcebook* was the call for all grassroots initiatives to collectively engage in building communication networks that would allow for greater sharing of ideas and resources, and for gathering additional support for specific projects. In this respect it is interesting to note the inclusion of an eight-page chapter encouraging interfaith enthusiasts to use the internet as a new medium for building networks and sharing resources. The chapter included a six-page annotated list of internet websites

dedicated to comparative religious studies, world religions and interfaith organizations. This is important in that the text was published in 2000, and reflects a time in which the internet was still in the early stages of development - access was limited to mostly urban centers and high-speed was a dream that had not yet been realized. As Beversluis indicated at the time "100 million or more persons" were linked to the internet and could access "thousands of instantly available religious Web sites" (356). In 2013, more than 2.8 billion people have access to the internet where they can view over eight million websites listed in a Google search of "interfaith" (searches with the synonyms "multifaith", "interreligious" garnered 815,000 hits and over one million respectively), suggesting the internet has truly become a key outreach tool for many interfaith initiatives (Google.ca search, 2013).

2.1.4. A Global Guide to Interfaith: Reflections From Around the World (2007)

The 2007 contribution by Sandy and Jael Bharat provides yet another emic perspective of the interfaith movement. In many respects *A Global Guide to Interfaith: Reflections From Around the World* is an updated version of *Sourcebook* except with a greater number of contributors. There are more than one hundred authors who contributed to the text, and more than fifty others whose contribution to the interfaith movement has been celebrated. Like *Sourcebook, Global Guide* provides the reader with information about the development of the interfaith movement, brief statements about various religious traditions, portraits of a wide range of initiatives within the interfaith

movement, overviews of issues that inspire interfaith organizations, guidance for organizing interfaith initiatives and reflections on the future of the movement.

While it was interesting to read messages penned by so many authors whose commitment and dedication has been truly instrumental in building the global interfaith movement, the sheer number of contributors meant each was limited to a few paragraphs which offered only the most general of statements or platitudes about the unity of all religions, or how one can find in all religions, teachings dedicated to tolerance and respect for diverse approaches to the sacred. Too often the statements offered little to no reference or discussion of sources. As such the book is quite light in content and offers little new material not found in either *Sourcebook* or *Pilgrimage*. What is particularly interesting about the book are the hundreds of photos peppered throughout of individuals active in interfaith initiatives around the world. While white grey-haired Christian males remain in the majority, it is obvious that editors of this publication made an effort to highlight contributions by Christian women, non-Christian men and women, and young adults. Overall the text provides little more than a very optimistic yet basic introduction to the interfaith movement.

2.1.5. Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action (2006)

Optimism is certainly a key characteristic of youth-centered interfaith work discussed in essays found within *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action* edited by Patrice Brodeur and Eboo Patel (2006). As with the other resources discussed thus far, *Interfaith Youth* is an anthology of contributors who are also

active in the movement. What is distinctive about this book is the effort for many to go beyond the tendency to just celebrate successes. Instead there are several authors who ask questions about the issues not often addressed by many interfaith initiatives – the exclusivist distinctions that have divided religions over the ages and the need to reach out to those who maintain exclusive religious or non-religious views (Boden 2006; Borkin 2006; Keen 2006; Kline 2006; Talcott 2006). Since the text focuses on the phenomenon of youth and interfaith activities and the authors are themselves youth participants who are often also pursuing academic degrees, contributions are articulate and of a length that allows for more in-depth portraits of youth-based activities. Most essays also include some analysis of the place of the activity or group within the interfaith movement. There are several essays dedicated to discussions of the future of interfaith work. For example the paper by J. Nathan Kline entitled "Theologies of Interreligious Encounters and Their Relevance to Youth", suggests a strong need to get beyond the exclusion/inclusion principle and spend more energy searching for answers to the questions:

> …what are the terms or grounds on which religious communities can cooperate for larger social issues? …Do religious communities cooperating with one another need to buy into a particular understanding of justice or what constitutes the common good? For interreligious cooperation to take place do participants have to believe religious differences are irrelevant to cooperation? Or are identifying and discussing differences essential? How do the terms/grounds for cooperation serve the sectarian and the "conservative" who, historically, have been suspicious of interreligious activity? Kline 2006, 43

Such questions were typical of the concerns expressed by many authors that youth-based initiatives wanted to move beyond establishing common ground among religious doctrines to working on common problems that affect all of humanity – i.e.,

environmental issues, social justice concerns, human rights, world peace, divisive nature of religious fundamentalism, etc. As Patel explained in his article "Affirming Identity, Achieving Pluralism", the youth involved in interfaith today are anxious to "bridge and multiply the social capital that exists in diverse faith communities, social capital that would otherwise be isolated"(Patel 2006, 21). Patel argues this is best accomplished through the development and use of a public language of faith that allows individuals to maintain and affirm distinct religious identities amidst religious diversity (ibid, 22).

Another theme addressed by many authors was the increasing diversity of approaches to interfaith activities. While formal dialogues continue where official representatives are invited to participate in round table discussions of position papers (see the WCC above), it is also common to participate in informal interfaith groups that might direct energies toward volunteering at the local soup kitchen, organizing panel discussions about specific religious practices or concepts, coordinating visits to local religious sites, or creating new interfaith worship rituals. Many of the youth-based organizations discussed in the book are local (often on-campus) grassroots initiatives that are not affiliated with any specific religious community or international organization. Instead they belong to independent organizations that may or may not network with other interfaith organizations. They are also more likely to communicate with one another via internet based list-services, websites or social networking websites (e.g. Facebook). This changing communication structure has allowed participants to spend more time in contact with people and less time encapsulated by institutions, shifting the overall structure of interfaith work (Patel 2006, 17).

2.1.6. Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots (2008)

The grassroots level is where personal informal dialogue most often takes place. Rebecca Kratz Mays celebrates this approach to interfaith encounters as critical for building the interfaith movement. In her own interfaith work and in that of contributors, there is a recognition that religious congregations are increasingly seeking to engage religious others more directly. To meet that need, the text *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots* (2008), was designed to encourage readers to "engage this collection with eyes open to the possibilities for interfaith encounters in the churches, synagogues, and mosques in the neighborhoods where you live" (Kratz Mays 2008, 3). This emic perspective text contains contributions from both scholars and practitioners invested in the interfaith movement, and includes a preface and chapter by Leonard Swidler, celebrated scholar of interfaith and founder of the Dialogue Institute. The contribution by Swidler is not surprising given the text is a resource developed for and published by the Dialogue Institute. The text focuses on dialogue efforts amongst the Abrahamic Traditions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam, but "encourages the intentional work among all religious traditions" (ibid).

Each of the nine chapters offers clear directives for adopting various methods of dialogue from setting guidelines (Swidler), to building conversation circles (Winter), to bringing the dialogue into your religious community via storytelling, organized study groups of other religious traditions at respective houses of worship, thanksgiving services, and hosting guest sermons, among others (Patel, Kunze and Silverman 2008; Howe and Heim 2008; Kogan 2008).

Khaleel Mohammed offers what Rachel Kratz Mays described as a "frank, feisty and refreshing appraisal of our attempts at this difficult enterprise" (Kratz Mays 2008, 3). Mohammed identifies key barriers to dialogue with Muslims including "presuppositions, prejudices, and cultural gaps" (Mohammed 2008, 79). Mohammed's criticisms are directed toward both Muslims and dialogue partners. Muslims are criticized for reinforcing ideas of alienation by expecting youth (and other co-religionists who have adopted American cultural standards in dress and familial relations) to wear cultural dress when attending activities at the mosque. The result being an increasing alienation of the second generation, or children raised within American culture, creating tension in the home and mosque. Criticism directed toward dialogue partners include his concern about the all too common introduction that labels him as a "moderate" Muslim, as if he is somehow "different from the rest of the immoderate fanatic Muslims" (ibid). Likewise Mohammed calls attention to the "ultimate error" he has encountered too often at interfaith panel dialogues where fellow presenters will concentrate on reviewing their own speeches instead of actively listening to the current speaker - "they are only hearing, not heeding" (ibid, 84).

The closing chapter "Making Dialogue Real" by Maria Hornung, clearly calls upon theologians and religious leaders, educators, animators and grassroots organizations to network and share successes and challenges with each other. Most importantly, Harnung calls on interfaith participants to share with their home congregations or respective co-religionists – stating that the intrafaith dialogue is as important as, if not more than, the interfaith one (Hornung 2009, 99), a sentiment increasingly voiced by other interfaith participants and authors (Brodeur 2005; King 2011; McCarthy 2007;

Pedersen 2004). That a key aim of the text is for it to be a practical guide for the reader who wants to engage in interfaith work is reinforced by the inclusion of a series of questions for reflection/discussion and suggestions for action at the end of each chapter.

As with other emic texts, optimism about prospects for expanding interfaith engagement is a clear motivation for each contributor. Many contributors draw heavily on their own experiences as positive portraits to follow, to offer inspiration for making dialogue real. However, with the exception of the essay by Mohammed, there was little discussion of how to approach co-religionists who hold to a more exclusive perspective or who are not interested in building bridges. Also absent was any discussion of how to respond to backlash comments from co-religionists that any extra time should be dedicated toward building the home community. That is, how does one respond to comments like 'the mosque (insert here temple, synagogue, church, etc.), needs you more than an interfaith dialogue group'? As well, though there was interest expressed that dialogue provides an opportunity to approach issues of difference or conflict, little discussion or direction was dedicated to strategies for overcoming tensions that such topics might evoke at the dialogue table.

2.2. Etic Perspectives

The remaining texts in this chapter on organizational histories and developments within the interfaith movement offer examples of etic perspectives toward interfaith initiatives, in that the authors have approached their subject matter as an outsider or observer. Although authors of the first two texts, Patrice Brodeur (2005) and Kusumita

Pedersen (2004), have been active members within interfaith organizations, they are both recognized scholars of religion and have employed a scholarly or observer approach to their critical assessments of the interfaith movement. The remaining texts examine strategies that various government institutions (corrections services, military, healthcare) have developed to work with interfaith committees for meeting the faith needs of individuals served within each institution (Beckford and Gilliat 1998; Bourque 2006; Montreal St. Mary's Hospital no date).

2.2.1 Assessing the Interfaith Movement

"From the Margins to the Centers of Power: The Increasing Relevance of the Global Interfaith Movement" (Brodeur 2005)

"The Interfaith Movement: An Incomplete Assessment" (Pedersen 2004)

Patrice Brodeur and Kusumita Pedersen have both been active within the interfaith movement for most of their scholarly careers. While completing his studies, Brodeur was active in the World Congress of Religions for Peace (WCRP) for most of the 1970s and 1980s including time as the leader of international youth activities. Brodeur is also a scholar of Islam and interreligious relations and most recently held the Canada Research Chair on Islam, Pluralism and Globalization at the Université de Montréal (Interview Montreal). Pedersen has been involved in the interfaith movement for more than twenty-five years and has been active on the governing boards of many international organizations including the Temple of Understanding and the Interfaith Center of New York. Pedersen was also Chair of the Department of Religion at St.

Francis College in Brooklyn, New York with published research on interreligious dialogue and cooperation, global ethics and human rights (St. Francis College website, 2013). Given the academic backgrounds of both authors, their essays go beyond the descriptive perspective found in many of the texts discussed previously, to offer a critical analysis of developments within the global interfaith movement in the early twenty-first century.

The publication dates are important in that, as each author indicates the interfaith movement has grown exponentially in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center, providing a discernible shift in the structure, motivation and approach of interfaith encounters from the portrait of the movement offered by Braybrooke in 1992. In particular each author recognizes that despite the relatively small size of the interfaith movement, it has over the past century matured from a marginal activity to become a more mainstream religious expression. Growth began in earnest after the second World Parliament of Religion (WPR) in 1993 which each author recognizes as a defining point in contemporary developments. The various initiatives of the 1993 WPR attracted almost 10,000 people, and many more were aware of the proceedings given the existing networks of international interfaith organizations and the various independent religious organizations active in interfaith (World Council of Churches (WCC) and its affiliated chapters, Vatican and its broad membership, Muslim League, Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ), WCRP, etc.). Improved technology meant better access to transportation and communication, allowing for a more diverse religious population at the meeting including more visible attendance by women and youth. The formal nature of the proceedings meant that many of the participants were observers only. However, the

experience was enough for many who upon return to their individual communities actively sought to initiate or revitalize interfaith activities at a grassroots level (Brodeur 2005; Pedersen 2004).

For Brodeur, this attention to "glocal" or global to local variables allows the interfaith movement to present an "urgent solution to counterbalance extremist religious violence", whereby interfaith dialogue affects our perceptions regarding identity similarities and differences, transforming old closed (fearful perceptions) into new open spaces for deep personal spiritual transformation (Brodeur 2005, 45). Brodeur also notes that the grassroots movement is perhaps the most important development since 1993 as the movement shifted from the formal/ academic approach utilized by large international initiatives (WPR, WCRP, IARF, URI), to what he terms a "post-modern network culture" that increasingly utilizes the internet to share information and post activities to a far-reaching network of grassroots activities (ibid, 46). Brodeur cites development of the United Religions Initiative (URI) as an initiative greatly enhanced by this new network culture. URI was founded in 1995 as a result of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. While other well-established interfaith organizations initially deemed it to be superfluous, URI has thrived (ibid). URI uses the appreciative inquiry method to bring together small interfaith circles so they can "get to know one another" by working through a series of questions to set the stage for a new appreciation of one another (URI website). As the URI website explains:

> URI cooperation circles are self-organizing and self-governing, choosing what issue to take on and how. The Agenda for Action, inspired by a Javanese phrase, *Memayu Hayuning Bwano*, meaning "to work for the safety, happiness and welfare of all life", is offered as guidance for Cooperation Circle activities.
>
> URI website, 2013

From its early roots in 1995, URI has grown in 2013 to 592 cooperation circles in eighty-three countries, (ibid), a grassroots initiative that has become a real force in shaping the interfaith movement.

Pedersen echoes Brodeur in her assessment of developments in the late 1990s and especially after the events of September 11, 2001. As Pedersen indicates, she is reasonably certain that between two and three thousand formal interfaith organizations exist in the world today, and when informal organizations are included the number is likely to be well into five figures (Pedersen 2004, 78).

In the fallout from 9/11, many individuals banded together to form interfaith groups to counter the negative stereotypes cast upon Muslims in particular and religious people in general. For many of these groups the key interfaith activity has been focused on education followed closely by social activism initiatives. Education efforts center on increasing general knowledge about religion by informing various audiences about the merits religious diversity offers to society. These activities are most often directed towards co-religionists, religious communities, formal education systems (from primary to secondary levels), and the general public at large. Both authors also cite social activism as a key endeavour for many of the more recent interfaith initiatives which want to demonstrate to the greater public the positive social capital religion and interfaith activity generates in society to address a range of social ills.

In assessing the interfaith movement as a whole, each author echoed the sentiment expressed by Braybrooke in *Pilgrimage* that there is an increasing need for either the dominance of one international organization to act as the central network for all interfaith

activity or for the creation of another independent organization that many suggest be modeled after the United Nations (Pedersen 2004, 88).[12] Such an organization would allow for more efficient use of the existing limited resources available. Except for a few large international organizations most interfaith initiatives rely on volunteers and small budgets raised by donations (usually from the same volunteers). It is suggested that a central network would also reduce the competition for participants (and their limited funds), to attend the various activities that occur in the calendar year (ibid).

Each author also recognized the continuing problem of "representation" within interfaith activities. As Pedersen notes, most religious communities "differ exceedingly in their structures of authority and most are polycentric rather than centralized" (Pedersen, 89). As such, it is difficult to declare participants as "official" representatives of the whole tradition without acknowledging the diversity that exists within a tradition and even within sub-traditions. Representation is also an issue when it comes to outreach efforts to communities that maintain exclusive attitudes about the religious other. Both authors identified intrafaith dialogue as necessary for the future development of the movement for it is within the more exclusive attitudes that the most difficult divisions are most often noted.

---

[12] A concerted effort to establish an interfaith presence at the United Nations has achieved limited success. In 2007 the UN hosted its first dialogue on interreligious and intercultural understanding. Important to note the key focus of the event was to "reaffirm the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (UN website 2007). From the initial meeting, an effort was launched to mark 2011- 2020 as the UN Decade of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation for Peace. Although the idea was discussed in two consultation sessions, with many nations in support, the European Union as a block opposed the idea arguing that "the UN could play a facilitating role in the field of intercultural and interreligious dialogue, but should not lead such a dialogue" (Decade for Peace website).

The portraits and assessment of the interfaith movement by Brodeur and Pedersen offer more critical reflection on developments especially since the 1992 release of *Pilgrimage of Hope* by Braybrooke. While each author identifies areas requiring further attention, the overall assessment is that the interfaith movement offers one of the most positive expressions of religiosity in contemporary times and if managed correctly could be a real force in shaping the global attitudes about religiosity in general and the religious other in particular. As Pedersen states in her conclusions:

> Interfaith work has been spurred by awareness, keener now than ever, that the alternatives to this conscious and active engagement are willed ignorance, self-imposed isolation, religious triumphalism, and, most of all, religiously influenced discrimination and violence. In the history of the interfaith movement, now over 100 years old, the forms of this engagement have made an important early contribution.
>
> Pedersen 2004, 93

2.2.2 Interfaith and Government Institutions

The book *Religion in Prison: 'Equal Rites' in a Multi-Faith Society (1998),* by James Bedford and Sophie Gilliat provides an in-depth profile of how the prison system of England services the multi-religious needs of its population. As the authors explained, decreasing budgets and increasingly diverse religious identities of the incarcerated have created several challenges to the Prison Service Chaplaincy mandate of guaranteeing the religious rights of all registered prisoners as stated in the Prison Act of 1952. One such challenge the authors identified was the emphasis in the Prison Act that every chaplain be a 'clergyman of the Church of England' (Beckford and Gilliat 1998, 27), thus the only paid chaplains in the program are Christian. Even though the Prison Act also acknowledges that where numbers warrant, prisoners claiming a religious identity other

than the Church of England can request that a "relevant minister be appointed or allowed to visit them in prison"(ibid, 28). However, a "visiting clergy" must perform the spiritual support duties as part of normal pastoral obligations with the specific religious community of the clergy person covering any related costs. This has created an obvious tension. Overall reduction in financial resources dedicated to the chaplaincy program has also greatly reduced all types of religious services available to prisoners (specific dedicated worship spaces, fulfillment of full dietary regulations, on demand access to religious clergy, etc.), with many institutions providing only basic dietary requirements. The study includes a comparative portrait of the prison chaplaincy program in the United States where "the principle of the non-establishment of religion means that tax dollars of American citizens are not used to build separate facilities for different religious groups" (ibid, 184). In the United States, non-denominational chaplains are trained to act more as liaisons between the prisoner, the religious community and the prison administration to facilitate the individual worship needs of the incarcerated. Even specific religious dietary requirements have been neutralized by the development of a "Common Fare" diet that inmates must apply for (ibid, 189). The diet is primarily vegetarian with kosher meat entrees available three times per week – strict vegetarians are advised to access the salad bar for meals (ibid). Clergy are volunteers and services to inmates are sponsored by specific faith communities (ibid).

The emphasis on chaplain as facilitator of religious needs is also the case for the Chaplaincy unit of the Canadian Armed Forces and, even more so, in the Chaplaincy program at St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal. As with the portrait on chaplaincy in prisons, we see Christians taking the prominent role in military and healthcare chaplaincy

programs. Ron P. Bourque explained in his essay "Religious Pluralism and the Current and Future Structure of the Canadian Forces Chaplaincy", that military chaplains are most often Christian is to be expected since the overwhelming majority of individuals in the military identify with a Christian religious identity (or no religious identity) (Bourque 2006). However, Bourque recognizes that as the Canadian population becomes more religiously diverse it is inevitable that the Canadian military will also become more religiously diverse. In recognition of future diversity, the Canadian military chaplaincy program has been actively restructuring its chaplaincy training program to include more courses about servicing the moral and spiritual needs of military members from non-Christian traditions. There has also been an effort to recruit and train chaplains from Canadian First Nations, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh and Hindu communities; however at the time of the publication only one Muslim had completed the chaplaincy training program (ibid).

Meeting the spiritual needs of individuals in healthcare centres across Canada is the key directive for in-house chaplaincy programs. For example, the Pastoral/Spiritual Services department at St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal produced a guide for the medical staff at the hospital entitled *Caring Across Cultures* (no date).[13] Such handbooks are common in healthcare institutions and are often produced in-house by the coordinator of the Chaplaincy program. In the twelve-page handbook produced for St. Mary's Hospital the responsibility of the chaplain is clearly stated as one who will be the liaison between the patient, the medical team, and the religious community of the patient to facilitate all

[13] Although the version of the handbook "Caring Across Cultures" does not have a date, the copy references was accessed in the winter of 2007 and provided by a Chaplain at the hospital who indicated it was a current source for all hospital staff negotiating cultural relations.

spiritual care needs. At twelve pages covering both ethnic /cultural (Black, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Jewish, Polish, Portuguese, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Ukrainian) and faith origins (Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism), the handbook offers only the most basic description of distinct healthcare needs that might be asked of individuals categorized by ethnic origins or by faith tradition. The intent of the handbook is that the information will "lessen the stresses on staff", allowing healthcare practitioners to be "more comfortable in dealing with patients and families of different cultures and faiths" (St. Mary's n.d., 3). However, as the resource is so limited, dialogue with the patient and/or family of the patient remains critical to determine specific needs.

A key characteristic of each of the above etic texts is the position of neutrality taken by the overarching institutions charged with servicing a religiously diverse population. In each of these scenarios we see government institutions taking a pro-active approach to ensure that, whenever possible, the constitutional right to free expression and practice of religion is available to the population being served.

Another key characteristic of the interfaith interests of each institutional approach is the ongoing dependency on Christian chaplains to administer the programs. This is primarily due to the fact that in each case when the original programs were designed the target populations were essentially from a 'homogenous' Christian population. Reflecting changes in the religious demographic, it is probable that as non-Christian populations grow, representation of religious leaders from diverse traditions will also be incorporated into both the administration and delivery of government sponsored services.

2.3. Global Interfaith Movement: Five Phases of Development

The above selection of texts offers insight into a number of key characteristics that have shaped and continue to shape the global interfaith movement. The global interfaith movement has since its official birth at the 1893 World Parliament of Religion (WPR), journeyed through five distinct development phases.

Phase One: 1893 to Post WWII

Phase Two: Post WWII to 1960s

Phase Three: 1970s to 1993

Phase Four: 1993 to 9/11

Phase Five: Post 9/11

The following draws from the above texts and other sources to summarize key developments within each phase.

2.3.1. Phase One: 1893 to Post WWII

As was discussed above in Marcus Braybrooke's account of the 1893 World Parliament of Religion (WPR), participants left the event with excitement and enthusiasm for the further development of this important new religious voice. However, the global interfaith movement experienced limited growth until well after the Second World War. While there was a concerted effort by a few to continue building relations forged at the WPR, most of those relations tended to be focused on building ecumenical relations amongst diverse Christian movements. That being said, there were a few international

organizations spawned from the 1893 WPR, most notably the International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF), an organization that went through several transformations from its primarily Unitarian roots to a formal interfaith organization by the mid-1940s (Braybrooke 1993, 47-57). The key issue addressed by the IARF was to pursue political justice for individuals persecuted or denied social status due to their religious identity (ibid).

Aside from the IARF, as Braybrooke noted, there were several informal discussions about the need for interfaith cooperation for peace initiatives (Braybrooke 1993, 119-169). The period marks the continued effort to build what would become the World Congress of Faiths (1936), a formal initiative that began with invited select religious leaders and scholars to host dialogue meetings (Braybrooke 1993, 80-89). The World Congress of Faiths continues today with ongoing formal dialogue meetings, management of the journal *Interreligious Insight*, and sponsor of interfaith education events primarily within England. Marcus Braybrooke has been a member of the organization since 1964 and is currently a joint president (World Congress of Faiths website, 2013).

Although both the IARF and World Congress of Faiths continued beyond this first phase development of the interfaith movement, they were the exception. There were several factors that may have contributed to the limited expansion of the movement during this period. The fact that so few non-Christians participated in the 1893 WPR, limited the potential network to build from. As noted by Braybrooke, less than 15% of presentations were about non-Christian traditions and many of those were presented by Christian academics in Religious Studies (Braybrooke 1993, 31). The rather homogenous

nature of many Western countries where most of the key Christian organizers lived created another problem, that being the difficulty of meeting with individuals of other faiths. Emphasis on Western nation-based meetings and limited resources created barriers for participants to attend face-to-face meetings given the expense and time-consuming nature of travel during the period. That is, only those who could afford the time and expense attended, or more specifically scholars and religious leaders of well-funded communities, i.e., mostly white male Christians. As Pedersen has aptly stated, a key component for interfaith activities is the presence of an interfaith population (Pedersen 2004, 87).

This first period of the interfaith movement was marked by limited success.

2.3.2. Phase Two: Post WWII to 1960s

It was not until after the Second World War that a significant shift in interfaith activity developed. It is important to note that the post WWII period was critical in that it marked the development of a number of formal international institutions including the United Nations (1945), the adoption of the Declaration of Human Rights (1948), and the 1948 founding of the World Council of Churches (WCC) as a key ecumenical organization, each of which informed/contributed to the further development of the global interfaith movement.

One well recognized interfaith initiative that came out of this period was the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ), a formal concerted effort to address the atrocities

of the holocaust through the development of bilateral dialogue efforts between Christians and Jews (Braybrooke 1993, 178-214). Although the CCJ was distinct from the WCC, many CCJ chapters sprung up in countries and cities that were also home to chapters of the WCC with Christian participants often attending both chapter groups.

While the Roman Catholic Church was hesitant to align itself with the World Council of Churches, there was a movement to modernize the Roman Catholic Church which culminated in the calling of Vatican II by Pope Paul VI. Vatican II was a formal discussion amongst leaders within the Roman Catholic Church that lasted from 1962 to 1965 in which a full range of issues were discussed, the results of which initiated the most significant changes in the Roman Catholic Church in recent times (Teasdale 2004, 9-22). Of particular interest for this study was the adoption of *Nostra Aetate*, in which the Roman Catholic Church recognized that people of living faiths outside the Catholic faith were to be respected. This gesture was followed by the establishment of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (PCID), which has since 1964 opened the door for Catholics the world over to engage in interfaith dialogue initiatives. As with the World Council of Churches sub-unit for Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, the first initiatives of the Vatican PCID were primarily focused on Christian-Jewish dialogues with outreach to other faith traditions developing more in the 1970s and beyond.

This second period was most marked by formal Christian-based initiatives in which small groups of mostly male religious leaders, theologians or scholars, were invited as "official representatives" in formal dialogue endeavours centered primarily on exchanges between Christian and Jews. Although limited in participation and scope, the

efforts of these organizations provided an important baseline for many initiatives that developed in the next phase.

2.3.3. Phase Three: 1960s to 1993

This period is marked most prominently by many Western nations adopting a more open immigration policy which resulted in the mass migration of people from around the world to Western nations. Of course migration of people also meant migration of cultures and religions transforming the previously homogenous populations of Western nations into increasing multicultural societies, especially within urban centres.

As mentioned previously, Pedersen's requirement of an existing multi-religious population to support interfaith work (Pedersen 2004), was realized in many western cultures during this time which contributed to further development of interfaith initiatives. As a result there were a number of local, national and international organizations that developed during this time.

The World Council of Churches and Vatican continued to support their respective offices dedicated to the endeavour of engaging in bilateral discussions with various faith communities, most notably Jews then Muslims, with limited outreach to Hindu and Buddhist communities (Braybrooke 1993, 228-242; Borrmans 1981 (Catholic – Muslim); Rousseau 1985 (Christian-Muslim); Coward 1990 (Hindu-Christian dialogue)). As with dialogue efforts in the previous phase, these initiatives tended to be formal in nature – organized and often run by formal Christian institutions, with invited participants (male

religious leaders), who were often considered to be "representatives" of their traditions, despite claims of being individuals of faith who follow a particular tradition.

The World Council of Churches also encouraged interfaith dialogue efforts with publications like *Spirituality in Interfaith Dialogue* edited by Tosh Arai and S. Wesley Ariarajah, the latter at the time was the Director of the WCC Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths (Arai and Ariarajah 1989). Such publications looked to scholar practitioners to share their spiritual development through interfaith encounters (discussed in more detail in Chapter Three).

The period also marks growth within international multifaith organizations such as the World Conference for Religions for Peace (WCRP), an organization that was formally established in 1970 at a conference in Kyoto, Japan (Braybrooke 1993, 131-162). As the organization's name suggests, the focus of participants (scholars, clergy and lay practitioners), was to work to demonstrate the collaboration of religious people in efforts to promote world peace. At the Kyoto Conference it was agreed that activities would follow one of four programmes:

a. To initiate inter-religious seminars and conferences at all levels in order to create a climate for peaceful resolution of disputes among and within nations without violence.
b. To encourage the establishment of national and regional interreligious committees for peace.
c. To develop an inter-religious presence at the United Nations and other international conferences, whereby the influence of religion can be directly exerted to resolve conflicts.
d. To encourage the further development of the science of inter-religious dialogue for peace.

Braybrooke 1993, 160

From its foundation, the WCRP has been a key organization for building grassroots interfaith work throughout the period in the lead up to the 1993 World Parliament of Religion. This development is due in large part to the directive for encouraging the establishment of chapters groups in mostly urban centers throughout the world. Growth in the WCRP chapter groups also benefitted from the peace movement which was active throughout the 1970s and 1980s as a present social concern for many within and beyond traditional religious communities (Interviews Calgary, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). WCRP activities remained mostly formal at the international level with international conferences held in 1974 (Louvain – 175 participants), 1979 (Princeton – 354 participants), 1984 (Nairobi – nearly 600 participants), and 1989 (Melbourne – 600 participants) (WCRP website 2013). These conferences tended to attract scholars and religious leaders and followed the similar formal pattern of pre-conference circulation of papers, addresses at the conference and working groups to develop formal declarations and directions for distribution to chapters (Braybrooke 1993, 131-162). Although attendance at the international conferences was small, the effort to extend directives to chapter groups ensured activity and growth between each international event.

In an effort to 'build communication and mutual understanding" amongst grassroots interfaith organizations the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN) was established in 1989 (NAIN website 2013, Mission and History page). After attending the 1983 World Congress of Faiths meeting in England, the American-based Temple of Understanding was charged with the task of building a directory of interfaith organizations. The initial survey identified thirty-five organizations, many of which expressed interest in meeting one another to share resources and experiences. Thus in

1988 the first NAIN meeting was held in Wichita, Kansas. Since then, annual conferences are held at locations across the United States and in Canada. By 2013, the membership roster listed sixty-two interfaith groups (ibid).

Sallie King recognizes the 1960s as an important period in the development of academic departments devoted to religious studies (King 2011, 103). As King explains, "in many ways, [religious studies departments] prepared the field for interreligious dialogue by presenting the world's religions on an equal basis, without preferential treatment" (ibid). Although the broader endeavour of building knowledge about the diverse histories and practices of religious traditions was and continues to be the aim of academics in religious studies, scholarship of the period that was focused on interfaith relations remained primarily within the Christian theological circles with notable contributions from Muslim and Jewish scholars (e.g., Bryant 1986, 1989 (Christian–Other); Coward 1990 (Christian–Hindu); Kasimow and Sherwin 1991 (Jewish–Other); Rousseau 1985 (Christian–Muslim)). It was in 1985 that Paul Knitter wrote his text *No Other Name?: A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* in which he unpacked the exclusive/inclusive/pluralistic approaches to the religious other discussed previously in Chapter One. The period marks the launch of several scholarly journals or journals with editions dedicated to interfaith (eg. *CrossCurrents* (1990), *Dialogue and Alliance Interfaith Journal* (1987), and the fall 1985 edition of the *Ecumenical Review*).

The late 1980s also saw the first scholarly conferences dedicated to interfaith dialogue. One example is the 1988 "Seminar on Interfaith Dialogues" held at Madras Christian College in India with over twenty-seven papers by scholars/practitioners of

Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh traditions which were collected and published in 1991 (Rao 1991). Another focused on Buddhist-Hindu interactions was held at Carleton University (Ottawa) in 1990, which resulted in a published volume with half of the thirteen essays penned by religious studies scholars and the remainder by practising religious scholars (Subramaniam 1993).

In comparison to the previous period, growth of the global interfaith movement was modest yet still mostly focused on formal and scholarly approaches to negotiating relations with the religious other.

2.3.4. Phase Four:1993 World Parliament of Religion to 9/11

In 1993, the second World Parliament of Religion (WPR) was revitalized with a meeting that was once again in Chicago, USA with over 10,000 participants (WPR website). The WPR has continued to host parliaments every five years with attendance increasing for each (1999 – Cape Town, South Africa; 2004 – Barcelona, Spain; 2009 – Melbourne, Australia) (ibid). The WPR describes itself as "the deliberate formal encounter of many religions, East and West, …to ponder the place of faith and spirituality in the modern world" (ibid). In the tradition of formal interfaith dialogue, each WPR has had as a focus the circulation and development of formal statements.

For example in 1993 the WPR focus was on the working paper *Toward a Global Ethic: Initial Declaration,* written by Hans Küng. In the preamble to the document is found the oft-quoted statement by Küng, "There can be no peace among the nations

without peace among the religions!" (Küng 1993, 43). In preparation for the 1993 WPR, Küng consulted with almost two hundred well-known scholars of religion and representatives from various faith communities to determine what should and should not be included in the draft (ibid, 52). However, multiple issues contributed to a very short circulation period for the final draft – less than two months before the 1993 WPR (ibid, 66). Due to time constraints during the parliament, the Declaration was presented to the Assembly with the proviso that it could only be discussed and that no changes would be allowed (ibid). The initial draft received mixed reviews. Many expressed concerns, and later wrote about important issues related to the process, participation, language and being too firmly rooted in 'Western' thought (Durran 1996; King (S) 1998; Knitter 1995; O'Connor 1994). There was even one request by a Muslim delegate that the proposed Declaration be "demoted to a working paper", a motion that did not secure the required majority (Küng 1993, 66).

In particular, June O'Connor criticized the "managed" process for composing and revising the global ethic document in her 1994 essay "Whose Consensus?" (O'Connor 1994). O'Connor identified several factors which exerted undue pressure on individual delegates to endorse the document (O'Connor 1994, 157). The limited time and distribution of the original draft left many with little opportunity to review and comment on the draft. As well, the proviso eliminating the opportunity to revise the statement meant it was an all or nothing document. O'Connor also noted that delegates could have felt pressured to endorse the document as it was well-known that the parliament leadership wanted to "make the signing of the declaration not only a parliament event, but also a media event" (ibid, 162).

Inclusive participation or representation was also identified as a problem for the process and final document (Durran, 1996; Hasselmann, 2001; King (S), 1998; Kuschel, 1993). Even in the planning stages evangelical and fundamentalist church groups refused to collaborate, and four Jewish groups and a group from the Greek Orthodox of Chicago withdrew support (Kuschel, 1993: 95). In response to the lack of participation by fundamentalists, Khalid Durran, a Muslim and historian of religion, wondered if those gathered should not be more concerned about whether it was even possible to achieve consensus among people from diverse moderate / liberal faith communities (Durran 1996). Christel Hasselmann highlighted the fact that not only do those involved in interfaith dialogue come from moderate / liberal faith communities, but they also tend to be the most moderate / liberal within their prospective communities and may agree to positions that would not achieve consensus within the faith community they practise within (Hasselmann, 2001: 34). Which begs the question who are the WPR representatives representing? Sallie King went even further and asked the question,

> …would it be "fair" to draft a document that calls itself "global" and then leave out some voices? In particular, would it be "fair" to leave out those who refuse to participate in the discussions, or those whose frequent public pronouncements yet leave no doubt that they are opposed to the very intention of the project, or those who covertly attempt to derail the project, or those—shall we make it difficult?—whose values are precisely the values that the framers and supporters of the document are intentionally trying to challenge and ultimately displace?
>
> King (S), 1998: 130

Despite the serious concerns, several scholars endorsed the global ethic document as a tool for bridging divisions within faith communities. Once again we can look to King who sees, with reservation, the global ethic document as an important opportunity for educating religious and non-religious people around the world.

> If the more conservative followers of the world's religions [including the non-religious] came to see that the morality of the "other" shares significant moral ground with "my" or "our" morality, their automatic impulse to reject and often vilify what is different from "me" and what "we" believe would be undercut at the base.
>
> King (S), 1998: 138

In his "History" essay Küng did comment that "such a declaration cannot be an end; it can only be the means to an end" (Küng 1993, 76). Like a guidepost on the road, the declaration indicates a point in time that shows both where we came from and where we could go. However, a notable oversight in Küng's "History" essay was the lack of reference to the only revision the WPR Assembly permitted, a re-wording of the original title of the document from "Declaration of a Global Ethic", to the final document title "Toward a Global Ethic (An Initial Declaration)" (Gómez-Ibáňez, 1996:10). This revised title was suggested as being more in keeping with the flexible approach required for the dialogue process itself and might better reflect the dynamic nature of ethics while identifying an important starting point for interfaith dialogue on a global scale (ibid).

Despite criticism, by the end of the 1993 WPR, the declaration was endorsed with over two hundred signatories including the Dali Lama, the Cardinal of Chicago, the Vatican representative, the representative of the World Council of Churches, the General Secretary of the World conference of Religions for Peace, the General Administrator of the International Baha'i Community, the spiritual head of the Sikhs in Amritsar, a president of the Lutheran World Alliance, the patriarch of Cambodian Buddhism, a leading rabbi, an Arab sheikh and hundreds of individual delegates, making the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic an "unmistakable sign of hope for the future of

religions and the peace of the world which beyond question could hardly have been expected only a short time ago" (Küng, 1993:73).

As with the 1993 parliament, in 1999 the WPR once again focused on development of a united statement. At this event, the WPR adopted "A Call to Our Guiding Institutions", as a complement to the "Declaration Toward a Global Ethic", and as an appeal for active, ongoing dialogue about the creation of a just, peaceful, and sustainable future for all humanity. The call encourages religious people the world over to engage in dialogue with key social institutions including governments, agriculture, industry, commerce, education, arts, communication, science, medicine and civil society (WPR website 2013).

While the period continued to be shaped by formal international organizations like World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), Temple of Understanding (TOU) and World Congress of Faiths (WCF), and United Religions Initiative (URI), there was a sharp increase in the development of grassroots initiatives that appealed to a wider spectrum of individuals and focus on various interfaith initiatives. This was especially the case at the local level where people of diverse faith traditions came together in response to social concerns around issues including poverty, homelessness, refugee placement, or assistance to new immigrants. These grassroots initiatives are often isolated efforts that may or may not participate in the larger national or international interfaith organizations like the WPR, WCRP, WCF, URI or national network building initiatives like the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN).

The last decade of the twentieth century also saw a marked increase in academic sponsored research initiatives concerned with questions about interfaith approaches to a wide range of subjects, discussed in more detail in the next two chapters. An example of select academic publications from the period reviewed in this survey include those with a focus on celebrating religious diversity through education about the religious other (Alexander 1995; Berthrong 1999; Wiggins 1996), interreligious spirituality and practice (Beversluis 2000; Dhamma 1997; Steenbrink 1999a, 1999b), peace building (Sikand 1999), theological questions (Ayoub 1995; Boullata 1995; Durran 1992; Fredericks 1998; Goddard 2000, 1996, 1995), and challenges within interfaith relations and dialogue (Ariarajah 1999; Aziz 1996; Cragg 1995; Denny 1995; Grelle et al. 1998; King (U) 1998; Knitter 1995; Mitri 1999; Morgan 1995; Nasr 1998; Singh 2001; Zebri 1997).

As immigration trends increased, the period also marked significant efforts by governments to develop policies and services that would meet the Universal Declaration of Human Rights freedom of religious expression requirements as a charter right for citizens accessing government services. This is most obvious in policies adopted by governments to accommodate the religious obligations of employees (recognition of holy days and religious obligations), correction services, health care, education and the military. Each has addressed these questions with varying levels of success with continued effort required.

In the closing decade of the twentieth century the global interfaith movement realized significant growth, from international organizations to local grassroots initiatives, with many individuals inspired by its potential to demonstrate positive relations among religious people.

2.3.5. Phase Five: Post 9/11

Then September 11, 2001 happened (referenced as 9/11). The attack on the World Trade Center marks a significant turning point for the interfaith movement. As Patrice Brodeur indicated, 9/11 brought the interfaith movement to the forefront as an important player to counter the negative portrait of religious extremism (Brodeur 2005).

Initially in the post-attack years there were several grassroots interfaith organizations that rallied to respond to the request for more information about religion in general and Islam in particular, from the media, religious communities and the general public. There was a significant rise in open house visits to local religious sites including mosques, temples, synagogues, gurdwaras, and churches of various Christian denominations. Public panel discussions with representatives from different faith traditions fielded questions about religious practices and beliefs. However, the pressing need in the months immediately after the event waned over time so that by the 2006 the number of public requests and attendance had diminished significantly (Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). As such, interfaith groups who had organized to meet that need searched for alternative activities to maintain dialogue including social justice work in the community such as participating in interfaith soup kitchens, thrift shops, environmental awareness activities or Habitat for Humanity projects (Brodeur 2003, 2005; Kratz Mays, et al. 2008; McCarthy 2007; Patel 2007; Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). Key to grassroots interfaith work during this period has been the desire to counter negative stereotypes of religious communities by increasing the amount of information available to the general public and concerted efforts to provide more and more opportunities for interfaith dialogue.

Formal international organizations continue, however, for some there has also been a noticeable decline in membership and shift in activities. The decline is due in part to limited resources including financial, space, staff, organizational support structures and memberships. Most interfaith organizations continue to be primarily volunteer organizations dependent on members. However, member resources are not always enough. For example, in Canada since 9/11, World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP) chapters in Calgary, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver have either been absorbed by other interfaith groups in their respective cities or have stopped activities altogether (Interviews Calgary, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver). Some speculate that membership decline stems from the fall of communism in the early 1990s which shifted the need for people to support WCRP activities (Interviews Montreal, Vancouver). Without an immediate crisis to focus on, there was not enough motivation for the group to continue (ibid). Others point to the increasing competition for people's time – "with so many demands on one's time to fulfill obligations to family, work, church, there is not much left for an interfaith group and activities" (Interview Vancouver). That diversity has become a normative social attitude has also been cited as a cause for declining membership or interest (Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). Although chapter grassroots activities are less prominent in Canada, the international organization continues to host world assemblies with religious leaders and scholars every few years. At the 2006 assembly in Kyoto, Japan the organization changed its name to Religions for Peace. The most recent assembly was held in 2013 in Vienna Austria (Religions for Peace Website 2013).

Several large international interfaith organizations continue to successfully promote dialogue initiatives and attract the resources and support needed. Organizations like the World Parliament of Religion, World Council of Churches sub-committee on Dialogue of People of Living Faiths and Ideologies, and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, receive financial contributions from formal and informal religious bodies to host their various interfaith work efforts. For example, since 1993 the World Parliament of Religion has secured the necessary resources to host meeting every five to six years. Alongside the official parliament sessions, the WPR has also been building a store of educational resources for use by religious communities engaged in interfaith work including videos, articles, stories and education resources (WPR website 2013). Since 2011, the WPR has also been hosting webinar training sessions in which leaders in the interfaith movement host discussions and training workshops on a range of topics. A few examples include: "How Interfaith Coalitions Can Strategically Combat Hate" (March 2013); A Holiday Sermon for Every Faith" (Dec 2012); "Media Training" (Aug 2012); "Interfaith Social Media" (May 2012); "Ending Poverty" (Dec 2011) (ibid). The webinars are open to WPR members from around the world and all have been archived on video for on-going access to content (WPR website 2013). However, with the webinars broadcast in English from United States time zones, the audience in limited.

The internet has become a central tool for communication and building networks among various interfaith organizations that increasingly host websites with resources for members and the larger community of online users. The use of social media options like Facebook, Twitter and Flickr has also grown as platforms for additional outreach efforts.

Like the World Parliament of Religion, the Interfaith Youth Core also host webinars and podcasts for the purpose of building a network and to share training activities.

The Interfaith Youth Corps (IFYC) has also grown to become a significant force within the American and Global Interfaith movement. From its head office in Chicago, IFYC has been building a network of on-campus interfaith groups. A key focus of IFYC is the interfaith leader program in which students attend multi-day Interfaith Leadership Institutes to learn skills for engaging, "diverse religious and non-religious identities to build the interfaith movement" on college campuses across the United States (Interfaith Youth Corps website, 2013). The IFYC website has almost one hundred and fifty training modules online designed for use by students, administrators and faculty member with clear guidelines for exploring topics or hosting events. There is even and interfaith checklist survey for an interfaith self-assessment. The IFYC has also sponsored several studies of interfaith activity on campus that continues to inform new resources (ibid). Since incorporation in 2002, Eboo Patel has been the charismatic and passionate leader of IFYC and regularly delivers key-note addresses, hosts online webinars that are also available as podcasts (ibid). Patel has published several essays about interfaith work, authored two books about interfaith cooperation *Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim, in the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation* (2010) and *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America* (2013), and with Patrice Brodeur was joint editor of the above mentioned *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement* (2006).

As the dates of resources discussed thus far attest, scholarship about and for the interfaith movement has certainly grown in the first decade of the twenty-first century, providing more resources for organizations and individuals who perform interfaith work.

Several new academic journals have been launched including *Interreligious Insight: A Journal of Dialogue and Engagement* (2003), *Faith Initiative Magazine* (2006), and *Journal of Inter-Religious Dialogue* (2009).

Education about diverse religious traditions and ways to engage religious diversity in a positive way is a key project of most interfaith organizations. Tolerance and respect of constitutional protected human rights appear to be the key consideration of government sponsored interfaith initiatives. There has also been a noticeable rise in governments including interreligious services to mark memorial events. As well, there has been growth in government sponsored interfaith councils to harness and grow the positive social capital of interfaith work to bridge diversity.

However, there remain questions about how to most effectively measure the effectiveness of the interfaith movement for building positive social attitudes about the religious other.

2.4. Demographic Characteristics of the Global Interfaith Movement

In terms of demographics within the global interfaith movement, Christians have been and continue to be the dominant tradition in many international and Western national interfaith organizations. Men also are the dominant gender at the governing level of formal international organizations with gender equity being an attribute more often present at the grassroots level. Young adults (under thirty), appear to be interested in participating but express a clear desire to go beyond visits to different worship sites or

interfaith celebrations. This is more evident in young adults who are enrolled or have recently graduated from college or university. Having been raised within a globalized world with increasing exposure to diverse cultures, ethnicities and ideologies, learning about the 'exotic' other is not as important as working together. As such, young adults want to participate in action-centered interfaith initiatives where people of different faiths collaborate on meaningful projects that address many of the social and environmental challenges present in the world today.

While there has been obvious growth in the number and types of interfaith organizations active in the world, the movement is still quite small with activity centered in urban areas. That said, some large international interfaith organizations - World Parliament of Religion, Temple of Understanding, United Religions Initiative (URI), World Congress of Faiths, and more recently the Interfaith Youth Core, have developed considerable credibility on the world stage as positive examples for building bridges and positive social relations amongst diverse religious communities. However, we are still in the early stages of research and it is yet to be seen how the successes of these initiatives will shape or contribute to increasing the profile of positive interfaith relations as a mainstream social attitude.

At this time it seems that interfaith initiatives tend to attract members from the moderate to liberal side of the spectrum within each religious tradition. Few organizations have been successful in building relations with conservative to orthodox expressions, those who may tend more toward an exclusive perspective when considering the religious other.

Despite ongoing challenges, the idea of interfaith cooperation has become more mainstream. The interfaith movement attracts members with diverse approaches to meet their curiosities and concerns, both of which are discussed in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE– MOTIVATIONS AND APPROACHES TO INTERFAITH WORK

> The three pillars of interfaith are: 1 – words and dialogue; 2 – actions and service; 3 – silence and meditation. (Interview Halifax)

> One cannot be a citizen of the world without knowledge of religion. (Interview Montreal)

> It is really important to listen in conversation with a person from another faith as you may hear a truth you had forgotten existed in your own. (Interview Toronto)

> Through small steps we can break the ices of hatred. Small steps are crucial. Small steps but with a ripple effect. (Interview Montreal)

> We need a project to work on together and let the relationships develop as we work together. (Interview Victoria)

> What I do is one drop in the ocean, but without it that would be one less drop! (Interview Vancouver)

As the above quotes by Canadian interfaith participants express, people come to interfaith work for various reasons and employ a range of approaches to meet the need. This first part of this chapter explore various themes identified by Canadians engaged in interfaith work that are also found in the global context including issues that have motivated so many to participate in interfaith initiatives. The second part examines various approaches to interfaith work including types of dialogue and highlights of actions performed in different geographical locations. As with sources in the previous section, the publication dates of resources in this section were written in the closing decades of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first century, once again reflecting the significant growth of interest in interfaith endeavours throughout the 1980s and 1990s. As well, this collection of texts offers a primarily emic perspective with several

contributors having been involved in various interfaith initiatives from formal international organizations through to informal local grassroots projects.

3.1. Key Motivations for Interfaith Work

The first part of this chapter examines selected texts which exemplify key issues of concern that motivate individuals to participate in interfaith activities and the implications and influences of each in the development of the global interfaith movement.

- Celebrating Religious Diversity: Building our Knowledge and Acceptance
- Shared Spirituality: An Obligation that Strengthens
- Theological Questions: Sharing and Comparing Religious Teachings
- World Peace and / or Peace Building
- Social Justice, Sustainability and Environmental Concerns

3.1.1. Celebrating Religious Diversity: Building our Knowledge of Religion and Acceptance

> Ignorance is a problem. Interfaith is about breaking barriers and building bridges.
> (Interview Toronto)

> I live interfaith every day. As a Christian interfaith has strengthened my faith because I have really had to figure out what I believe and how to articulate it – in a five minute conversation! I am reminded that for practising Muslims the entire day revolves around the fact that they have to pray again in a few hours, for Jews that kosher rules be followed or scheduled meetings rearranged for Shabbat. One of the most interesting interfaith meetings I attended was where we went around the circle and discussed the religious actions performed every morning before one leaves the house. It was both a humbling and enlightening conversation.
> (Interview Montreal)

> Interfaith work has introduced me to Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists and I have gained a new appreciation of all. (Interview Vancouver)
>
> Better to know a Buddhist than Buddhism! (Interview Vancouver)
>
> To really integrate ourselves into society there is a certain amount of work required. Interfaith is always more than tea and kosher snacks. People are lazy. They want to get along but don't want to do the educational work to learn more about the other. We need to find a way to make the knowledge more accessible. I don't want a degree in world religions. I just want to get along.
> (Interview Toronto)

From the early planning stages for the first meeting of the World Parliament of Religions in 1893, the desire to celebrate religious diversity has been a key motivation for many in approaching interfaith activities. In any statement, essay or directive produced by or about interfaith initiatives, one does not have to look far before coming across a statement about the need to celebrate religious diversity. For example, many grassroots interfaith organizations celebrate religious diversity within their communities by hosting religious sites visits, discussion panels, dialogues and workshops (see Brodeur 2003; Kratz Mays et. al. 2009; McCarthy 2007, chapter three). As well, the research and publications of religious studies scholars, theologians and religious leaders have created a growing collection of resources for learning more about religious traditions and their practices, including efforts to build bridges across traditions.

These themes have driven the conversation within interfaith initiatives from early dialogues to current grassroots efforts. A case in point is found in the collection of twenty-seven papers included in the 1989 book *Inter-Faith Dialogue and World Community* edited by Ch. G. S. S. Sreenivasa Rao. The papers were presented at the International Seminar of "Interfaith Dialogue for National Integration and Human

Solidarity" that took place at Madras Christian College in January 1986. The four-day conference included a "wide spectrum of religious leaders, philosophers, theologians, social scientists, educationists [*sic*] and others from different walks of life, representing almost all the living religions in the world, hailing from such countries as United States, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Italy, Thailand, Sri Lanka and from within the four corners of India" (Rao 1991, iii). Many of the contributors were or have become well-known actors in the interfaith movement including Fr. Thomas Michel, Dr. S. J. Samartha, Dr. Wesley Ariarajah, Dr. Syed Ali, and Rev. Marcus Braybrooke. As with many interfaith activities of the period, the roster is dominated by men with the majority being Christian scholars. The overall sentiment expressed in the papers was the need to embrace religious diversity as a natural attribute of the sacred with several Christian, Muslim and Hindu authors citing scripture that defends the divine edict that paths to the sacred are diverse (Rao 1991). However, relations with non-religious peoples was also discussed with the directive that it is important for religious peoples to counter negative stereotypes held by non-religious peoples and to ensure that secular governmental institutions do not dismiss the contributions religion offers to the moral and social fabric of contemporary society. It seems these particular trajectories are still in need of attention.

Several authors also made the call for governments and religious communities to engage in full-scale religious education programs to increase the general knowledge of religion and diminish the capacity for exclusive religious voices to dominate social views about the religious other. This was identified as a particularly important directive given the changing human migration patterns of the time which created more and more

opportunities for individuals to meet people with diverse religious identities, a situation that has grown exponentially since 1986. Here there has been limited progress.

Missing from the discussion was acknowledgment of historical to contemporary conflicts that have so often marred relations between religious communities. This is in keeping with most sources examined whose focus has been more directed toward celebrating commonalities across tradition instead of the more difficult endeavour of unpacking, and perhaps celebrating, the differences that have been more prominent markers within interfaith encounters over the ages and into contemporary times. This concern to delve more deeply into conflictual positions was voiced by several interviewees, but only discussed briefly in a few sources as a desired direction that has yet to be pursued (Kratz Mays et al. 2009; Patel and Brodeur et al. 2006; Pedersen 2004; McCarthy 2007; Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

3.1.2 Shared Spirituality: An Obligation that Strengthens

> We always pray together. Someone opens the meeting with a respectful prayer from their tradition. Another member from a different religious practice offers the closing prayer. (Interview Montreal)

> Meditation provides a common ground for interfaith practice. (Interview Halifax)

> There are levels and layers to interfaith encounters. From a contemplative perspective of shared worship, shared silence, meditation, chanting, dancing, all are reaching out beyond intellectual and traditional boundaries. (Interview Vancouver)

Another key motivation for individuals to participate in interfaith activities is the desire to engage in shared spiritual practices. For many, the experience is often described as a journey of mutual enrichment that has provided the vehicle to discover or rediscover spiritual richness within one's own religious tradition. A case in point is found in the 1989 book *Spirituality in Interfaith Dialogue* edited by Tosh Arai and Wesley Ariarajah. Published by the World Council of Churches, this book includes twenty-one papers written by individuals who have engaged in interreligious spiritual practices as part of their own personal spiritual journey. The practices are categorized as interreligious in that the pursuit was to engage in spiritual practices of a religious tradition completely outside their own. For instance, one article "Listening to the Silence: Through Zen and Taize", written by Michael Como, a Methodist, provided an account of his personal quest for spiritual fulfillment that began with a colleague reading of the *Tao Te Ching* (Como 1989). The book inspired Como to pursue formal study of Asian religions beginning with Indian, then Chinese and Japanese Buddhism. Eventually he found himself participating in a monastic community in Japan. While there he was intrigued to find that his quiet contemplation of Buddhist teachings led him to a greater interest in his own Christian roots which stimulated a study path in that direction ultimately taking him to participate in the Protestant Taize community in France. The contemplation of two faith traditions has at times been difficult to integrate into one's life, however, the effort has paid off. As Como explained, he lives in Japan in a house that contains a typical Japanese-style altar but alongside the icon of Shakyamuni Buddha are images of Jesus and Mary – every morning he chants "sutras before the Buddha Dainichi, every evening I

pray before my Franciscan cross and an icon of Mary" (ibid, 6). Neither tradition holds prominence over the other but both have contributed to his awakening to the sacred.

This awakening to a unity that binds all people, is a common theme in the papers and a common motivation for many who pursue interfaith spiritual practices. The distinctiveness of those who pursue inter-religious spiritual practices instead of conversion is that the pursuit is understood as building upon or at least in complement to a base tradition that remains prominent. As William James put it, in our contemporary social reality, religious practice might be better understood as a "multilayered spirituality, cobbled together from various sources" (James 1999, 275). That is, there is no supersession of the original faith practice.

3.1.3 Theological Questions: Sharing and Comparing Religious Teachings

> All theology is the afterthought of religious experience. (Interview Montreal)

> At an interfaith dialogue with Sikhs I asked myself to 'look at what these people are hearing from their religion. Where is that in my religion?' (Interview Vancouver)

> Every religion is getting it and not getting it. The overlap is interesting, as are the distinctive aspects. (Interview Vancouver)

> What is needed is grounding in our own tradition and to extend out. We need people who are strong in their faith. (Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith helps a so-so Christian become a good one. (Interview Edmonton)

> God is the God of all creation. God is not limited. God dwells out and beyond as well as deep and within. Interfaith has deepened, widened, heightened, expanded and affirmed my faith. (Interview Vancouver)

> Both Christians and Muslims require a clear theological position for dialogue. (Interview Montreal)

> There is a need for critical exegesis of secular texts like Locke, Descartes, Scientific method, Adam Smith, economics, health care, technology, etc. (Interview Montreal)

> There is no one Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, no monolithic expression. There are many rooms in each mansion. (Interview Vancouver)

> Interfaith offers a new way to broaden our theological understanding about faith. (Interview Toronto)

> Need to know best your own faith first. Need to also acknowledge your own fallibilities. (Interview Calgary)

Another key motivation for many who participate in interfaith dialogue initiatives is to search for "Truth", as given in each religious tradition. Participants in dialogues about theological questions tend to describe them as the most difficult of interfaith exercises due to the requirements of all participants to be fully knowledgeable about all facets of not only one's own tradition, but also to have at least a base knowledge of the religious tradition of the dialogue partner as understood by the dialogue partner. For example, in his 2001 article "Religious Truths and Basic Insights: Implications for Inter-Religious Dialogue", Hendrick Vroom states that it is important for each Muslim participating in a Muslim-Christian dialogue not only to be well-versed in teachings from the Qur'an, Hadith and Sharia law but to also know Christian teaching from a Christian perspective not just from a Muslim perspective, for the Muslim concept or "figurization" of the Christian tradition is quite different from how Christians see themselves (Vroom 2001, 421). Likewise Francis Clooney emphasizes that true dialogue between faith traditions requires true knowledge of the tradition of an 'other', including knowing the

language and culture that support the tradition to better understand the sacred texts and doctrines (Clooney 1990).

However, even a rich knowledge of the religious other is not always enough when tough questions are raised about the theology of a religious tradition. Although Muslims may be charged with insisting on Islamic depictions of Jesus and Muslim views of Christianity based on references in the Qur'an and Hadith, there remain several criticisms of Christian theology that many Muslims identify as serious barriers to a dialogue about theological questions, including:

1) corruption/forgery/innovation (*tahrif*) of revelation which is evident due to the many contradictions found in the Christian New Testament;
2) human changes to revelation (often blamed on St. Paul who is charged with shifting the philosophical framework from Semitic to a Greco-Roman structure, for incorporating pagan influences (e.g. Sunday after the Sun god), and for abrogation of the Sacred law);
3) the incorrect concept of humans as forever tainted by original sin;
4) the doctrine of the trinity which is against *tawhid* or the oneness of God;
5) the incorrect association (*skirk*) of the divine with Jesus called the 'Son of God' by Christians implying God must have taken on a limited human form;
6) representation or "western figurization" of Jesus (crucified, meek and spineless, violent, deceitful, against his mother Mary);
7) errors in practice (including idol worship, celibacy, liturgy, music, veneration of saints, asceticism);
8) the doctrine of salvation through Christ - not God alone.

These theological charges have held from the early period of Islam and many authors are of the opinion that they continue to be a serious barrier to interreligious dialogue for many Muslims (Ayoub 2004; Goddard 2000; Mitra 1999; Moussalli 1998; Nasr 1995 1998; Rudolf 1999; Siddiqui 1997, 1999; Singh and Schick 2001; Vroom 2001; Waardenburg 1999).

Despite theological differences, there are several Muslim dialogue partners who support pluralist leaning approaches to bridging theological differences (Ayoub 1999, 2004; Boullata 1995; Nasr 1998; Sigh and Schick 2001). They readily admit that an exegesis of resources within a given tradition (sacred texts and commentaries), offers important guidance for acknowledging positive attributes found within religious diversity. For example, Issa J. Boullata, a Christian scholar of Islam, in his essay "A Qur'anic Principle of Interfaith Relations" (1995), demonstrates how the Qur'an supports religious diversity by identifying several passages from the Qur'an which recognize pluralism as God's will, including "… for had God so willed he could surely have made you all one single community" (S. 11:118). Another key passage that recognizes the positive value of religious diversity is, "Vie, therefore, with one another in doing good works" (S.2:148).[14] As Boullata explained, this passage could be interpreted not as encouraging competition against one another, but rather as a call for "a concerted effort to do good works, to do good deeds; there should be emulation leading toward all that is good and in all virtues" (Boullata 1995, 44). From his perspective, Boullata sees the Qur'an as valuing religious pluralism as one of God's plans for humanity and that individuals, regardless of faith, must work together to build a moral society. This passage among others[15], is often cited within interfaith dialogue activities. In their essays, Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1987), and Seyyed Nasr (1998), echo Boullata's recognition of religious pluralism as the will of God / Allah that offers humanity a variety

[14] Additional Qur'anic verses Muslims point to as directives to engage in positive encounters with other religions include: Sura 2:62, Sura 2:111-112, Sura 5:82, Sura 3:64 and Sura 3:84 for relations amongst the Abrahamic traditions; Sura 2:253, Sura 11:118 and Sura 5: 48 for embracing diversity; and Sura 2:256 which discourages forced conversion (Ayoub, 2004; Boullata, 1995; Goddard, 2000; Hussain, 2006; Nasr, 1995, 1998; Pratt, 2006; Siddiqui, 1999; among others)

[15] See footnote 11.

of tools to better understand the nature of the divine. However, one should note that the optimism expressed by these scholars of Islam tends to reflect the more liberal or pluralist side of the spectrum, a minority within the larger tradition of Islam. But perhaps it is the leaven in the bread. As Thomas Michel, S.J. reminds colleagues in dialogue,

> Every time a Hindu or Christian parent teaches a small child that God also loves Muslims, Sikhs, and Buddhists, each time a school teacher brings some element of personal experience of other faiths to illustrate the common human quest for the transcendent, every time a guru, bonze, ustadz [*sic*], minister or priest teaches and preaches that people of all confessions must join hands to build a just and human society, the ideals of brotherhood, esteem and tolerance are moved forward a slight bit.
>
> Michel 1991, 36

Additional words of advice for those interested in pursuing answers to theological questions include the directive to avoid trying to identify a universal set of religious values. Gordon Kaufman, a liberal Christian theologian, recognizes that while the attempt to establish universal values may be noble and sincere, inevitably the attempt will reduce or eliminate the particular local symbolic, linguistic and conceptual frames of reference that are central to many faith communities (Kaufman 1987).

As well, Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1987) and Mahmoud Mustafa Ayoub (2004), offer critical advice to those who may be enamored with the "superiority" of their respective traditions. While both authors recognize the importance of drawing upon the theological teachings of one's own tradition, they likewise warn of the idolatrous tendencies that can accompany one's overzealous reverence for religious tradition – be it the Christian who idolizes Christianity or the Muslim who idolizes Islam or Hindu who idolizes Hinduism. Instead each author reminds all to recognize that each religious tradition (Islam, Christianity, Hinduism or other faith traditions), are only the means with

which each practitioner attempts to better understand the divine and that it is the divine which should remain the focus for all. This criticism is directed especially to those who hold exclusive or fundamentalist beliefs. However, the temptation toward idolizing one's religious tradition is a pitfall that can occur at any point on the spectrum.

Such pointed directives tend to limit the number of people who are motivated (or able) to participate in this type of interfaith dialogue, attracting mostly theologians, religious leaders and religious studies scholars. The high standards for engagement can also interfere with transferring results to co-religionists. Most often these "Truth" centered theological dialogues are waged through scholarly texts that require technical language and knowledge beyond that of the general practitioner at the grassroots level. As such, the impact of the work generated by these interfaith initiatives may have little influence on religious practitioners or the general public at large, the people who are most in need of theological tools to negotiate interreligious encounters.

This is not to say that lay people cannot participate in theological dialogues as many do, especially at the grassroots level. Instead, it suggests that theological questions need not be central to interfaith engagement. There are practitioners who suggest that a focus on theology can get in the way of good works that can be achieved through interfaith cooperation. This sentiment is more often present with those whose motivation for participating in interfaith work is most marked by a desire to join forces with religious people to counter some of the evils of the world, as the next two items discuss.

3.1.4 World Peace and/or Peace Building

> If you don't know someone who has been persecuted because of religion, you will soon. (Interview Vancouver)

> Crisis can be resolved due to friendships and commitment developed through interfaith groups. (Interview Montreal)

> After Lebanon in the summer of 2006 the interfaith climate was too hot to plan interfaith events for the fall. There was a silence on the internet, a powerlessness, a despair out there, a feeling of the calm after the storm. I wondered, are we going to throw out all the wonderful interfaith progress?
> (Interview Toronto)

> At the heart of the international movement is an ethic of non-violence.
> (Interview Halifax)

> Terrorism is a term we need to discuss. (Interview Vancouver)

> There is a rethinking of dialogue to defend the rights of others.
> (Interview Montreal)

Unfortunately, when one mentions religion in relation to world politics "conflict" is the word that most often comes to mind. Yet there are numerous interfaith initiatives whose aim is to work toward world peace. As accounts in chapter one attest, working for world peace has been a key aim of several organizations including the first interfaith organization after the 1893 World Parliament of Religion, the International Association of Religious Freedom (IARF). The World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) has since 1970 also been actively encouraging religious people the world over to join together in efforts to diffuse conflicts and work toward world peace. There are also many grassroots organizations actively involved in building bridges amongst religious communities otherwise estranged by conflict.

One example is demonstrated in the 2002 article by Ronald Young entitled "American Jews, Christians and Muslims Working Together for Peace in the Middle East". As the title implies, the article examines ways in which American Jews, Christians and Muslims address the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. As Young explains, such efforts are not always easy. While American Jews, Christians and Muslims have the benefit of living in a nation outside of the conflict zone, the daily struggle of fellow co-religionists in the Middle East often makes dialogue of collective activities too difficult to bear. And yet dialogue continues in the Middle East and beyond. Why? As Young explains:

> First, Israelis and Palestinians, striving to be politically realistic, recognize that it is impossible to understand what is happening and why without listening to the experiences and perceptions of people on the other side. Second, meeting with each other is even more important in times of violent confrontation to counteract the tendency to see only the worst about the other side. Third, by working together Israelis and Palestinians keep alive the common vision of peace, that is, Israel and a Palestinian state living side by side, a vision that can generate majority support on both sides. Fourth, Israelis and Palestinians working together – knowing that there are partners for peace on the other side and modeling negotiations for peace – are stronger and more effective politically than if they work completely separately. At a deeper level some persons involved in this common work believe they are commanded by their faith to work together for peace, even when it is extremely difficult to do so. Israelis and Palestinians work together because they believe doing so generates not only greater moral clarity but also greater political realism. These reasons for working together apply equally to the situation of American Christian, Jews, and Muslims who want to work for peace in the Middle East.
>
> Young 2002, 71

It is for many of the above reasons that people are motivated to participate in interfaith activities directed toward promoting peace amongst religious communities and beyond. While many participants recognize religion is often used as a political tool in such conflicts, and even interfaith work itself has been accused of avoiding or

suppressing the difficult questions conflict creates, those engaged in interfaith peace work often heed the call that "working for peace is not optional but fundamental to our faith" (ibid, 65).

3.1.5. Social Justice, Sustainability and Environmental Concerns

> Find common projects to work together and out of that comes fraternity of faith. (Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith events don't have to be major initiatives. Neighbours can do it! My neighbour doesn't have to share my faith but we can work together. (Interview Vancouver)

> Need to move beyond panels, beyond faiths fighting at the table. (Interview Toronto)

> Most of my peers from divinity school have gone into non-religious careers with a focus on social justice issues. Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith work needs direct action, but also needs to spend energy repairing social suffering experienced by faith partners. (Interview Vancouver)

Fulfilling one's religious duty is often stated as a motivation for individuals involved in interfaith initiatives whose focus is addressing issues related to social justice, economic sustainability and environmental concerns. It is perhaps these issues that attract the most number of committed religious peoples, whether the initiatives are officially interfaith, faith-based or non-religious non-governmental organizations. Such a call for action is central to the 1995 book by Knitter entitled *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility.* While the book includes a discussion of the roles religions have played in contributing to some of the social, economic and

environmental injustices present in the world today, more than half of the book is centered on providing the philosophical tools required for people of faith to come together in response to pending crises – to search for a global ethic, to give voice to the victims of economic inequity, to join forces to protect the sacred earth, to engage in what he calls "liberative dialogue" – to respond to the suffering of the world by walking together "in our commitment to eco-human justice" (Knitter 1995: 133).

Such sentiments are also expressed in writings by Gary Gardner (2002) and Kusumita Pedersen (2000). In both cases, the focus of each author is on the pending environmental crisis and the need for people of faith to search their religious teachings to counter the destructive consumption patterns that threaten the environmental equilibrium. In her detailed essay, "Environmental Ethics in Interreligious Perspective", Pedersen highlights specific teachings found in Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and indigenous traditions that could be drawn upon in efforts to promote an environmental ethic within each tradition or as a baseline for interfaith dialogue (Pedersen 2000).

Gardner echoes the call by Pedersen, but perhaps with more emphasis on engagement – specifically asserting the call for engaged religion to mobilize and respond to the pending environmental crisis. In particular Gardner identifies five strong assets religious institutions and leaders bring to the effort to build a sustainable world:

- the capacity to shape cosmologies (worldviews)
- the ability to assert moral authority
- the ability to mobilize a large base of adherents

- access to significant material resources to support the movement
- and ability to utilize existing community-building capacity

Gardner 2002

It is this last asset that is most important to the engaged religion formula Gardener promotes, as it is communities of people who share similar perspectives on issues of ultimate concern that Gardner sees as necessary for a meaningful collective social response to the pending environmental crisis. In particular, Gardner argues that religious communities have the "particular capacity to generate social capital: the bonds of trust, communication, cooperation and information dissemination that create strong communities" (Gardner 2002: 19).

While the directives suggested above are seemingly embraced as a key motivation for interfaith work, there are few examples of actions. Exceptions are found in 'greening sacred spaces' programs that encourage religious communities to retrofit houses of worship for greater energy-efficiency (Biscotti and Woolsey Biggart 2014). As Dina Biscotti and Nicole Woolsey Biggart explained in their study of two American interfaith environmental organizations, what distinguishes their efforts is the focus on "reinterpreting theology to embrace stewardship of the natural world and to connect environmental beliefs to religious practice" (ibid, 416). The study recognized participation by religious communities across traditions, with interfaith interaction mainly limited to professional program workshops and annual award ceremonies that celebrate the most effective or ingenious retrofit exercises (ibid, 427-428). These interfaith

programs seem to promote friendly competition for doing good works. A laudable activity for sure. Although dialogue is not central to the endeavour, bridges are being forged amongst diverse religious communities.

3.1.6. Observations on Motivations for Interfaith Work

The above accounts do not address all issues that motivate individuals to participate in interfaith endeavours, they do speak to some of the more prominent themes expressed by Canadian interfaith participants that have also shaped the global interfaith movement.

An essential theme for most interfaith work is the need to recognize religious diversity as a natural attribute within the contemporary context where globalization offers greater opportunity to engage and embrace diversity. The desire to build tools for negotiating religious diversity in a positive way is also a call that many respond to by looking within their respective religious traditions. Likewise, the desire to deepen understanding and empathy for the religious other brings many people to the interfaith table. Others are motivated to be part of the development of an important religious voice, one that demonstrates the positive contribution religion offers to the world. This is particularly important in the collective search for solutions to the various global to local social, political and environmental issues.

Missing from the scholarly and practitioner resources reviewed are three themes or motivations raised by Canadian participants including a clear desire to affirm one's

own tradition when compared to others, the opportunity to engage with the 'exotic' religious other, and a fear that our collective future depends on the success of the interfaith movement.

Several interviewees claimed their ongoing participation within interfaith groups has been reinforced in part by the regular affirmation that in comparison with others, their own religious tradition offers the most complete path to follow.

> Interfaith has strengthened my faith. I see deficits in other traditions that make me proud of the product I have despite the bumps, hills and valleys. (Interview)

> The basic tenants of my faith are good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. There is no dogma or doctrine. I would not give up Zoroastrianism for any other religion. (Interview)

> My personal role is to alert Catholics about the involvement of Catholics in interfaith. (Interview)

Although one mantra repeated by participants within the interfaith movement is to come to the table as a committed religious person and to expect the dialogue to enhance one is understanding of other traditions and one's own, there is little discussion about how such self-affirmation can at times tend towards a triumphalist tone. A common finding by many participants of interfaith dialogue is that the experience can convince or reaffirm the value found within and lead to a recommitment to one's own tradition as most clearly and fully expressing "T"ruth. While most interfaith participants are quick to acknowledge and even celebrate the value and truth found within other traditions, there are a few who also conclude that alternative traditions are perhaps less worthy, or even wrong in their teachings. That is, the interfaith experience allows for comparison and a

judgement in favour of one's own tradition as providing the best resources for going forward. This does not mean that such participants will necessarily aim to convert others, but perhaps this triumphalist leaning tone of affirmation that one's own religious path is the most appropriate, may nonetheless be a motivator for some to continue attending interfaith activities.

Several Canadian participants also made reference to the interfaith experience as providing the first opportunity for many to encounter a religious other. This is a reasonable outcome, especially for older participants, given the mostly homogenous Christian population that has defined the Canadian landscape for most of the twentieth century. However, when asked about strategies for building interfaith group membership, several mentioned that while outreach events like religious site tours often attract new people rarely does that result in new members. One assessment is that the motivation for these mostly multi-generation Canadian Christians to attend such events may be more related to appeasing individual curiosity to view the exotic religious other, rather than becoming part of an interfaith dialogue. However, such sentiments were often qualified with hopes that even isolated encounters should be viewed as perhaps the first step towards deeper appreciation and celebration of religious diversity (Interviews Vancouver, Montreal).

While optimistic, such views did not account for the seeming absence of interfaith representation from the many equally 'exotic' ethnic Christian groups that have a growing presence within Western nations including Canada. When interviewees were asked why ethnic Christians were not explicitly invited to participate in group activities several responded that there are already too many Christians at the table (Interviews

Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver). Within the larger international interfaith organizations like the World Parliament of Religion (WPR), World Congress of Religions for Peace (WCRP), and United Religions Initiative circles (URI), there have been efforts to include participants from all religious traditions, including diverse ethnic Christian groups, yet within a North American grassroots level context, participation remains minimal to none.

Fear about the future was a clear motivator for several interviewees but not explicitly found within the resources reviewed. That is interfaith work is critical for building positive relations within a global reality of religious diversity. Many resources reference to the need for 'building bridges' among religions, that knowledge of the other brings understanding, that within each religious tradition we can find teachings about morals and values which are shared, that learning more about the other promotes good relations. There is also the oft-quoted statement by Hans Küng, "there will be no peace among the nations without peace among religions. There will be no peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions" (Küng 1993). Yet, we live in an age where conflict and violence associated with religious ideologies continues to be a present reality, and as noted above there continue to be several interfaith initiatives directed towards building bridges for world peace. However, what is less prominent within the resources is reference to a fear or urgency to act as a motivator for participation. That is, several interviewees expressed great concern that interfaith work is critical for changing social attitudes about religion and that the future depends upon its success.

> I have a firm belief that the community has to have a means to bridge diversity. If we don't counter the destructive forces of religious radicals we will be susceptible to the problem of difference. (Interviews Vancouver)

> Unfortunately many today promote difference, promote the clash of civilizations. Secularism and indifference is growing. (Interview Toronto)

> It is easier to recognize the other when there is more diversity. However, there is always a risk of polarization. We cannot take multiculturalism for granted. (Interview Montreal)

> Interfaith may be the only force to respond to the ills of globalization. The last chance to pull back from the brink of disaster. (Interview Edmonton)

> We need to know each other's religion and culture. It's the only way! (Interview Halifax)

Those quoted above also expressed great hope for the future and several also recognized the limitations of the interfaith movement. However, the expressed concern to change the course of social attitudes about religion to one that celebrates the positive qualities and social contribution is clearly seen as a pressing one and has been a significant motivator for some to continue their participation within interfaith initiatives.

3.2 Interfaith Initiatives: Types of Dialogues and Geographical Distinctions

This second part of Chapter Three considers various approaches to interfaith encounters which have shaped the global interfaith movement. Once again, the sources date from the late 1990s and early 2000, and once again the authors are also active participants in the movement. However, in this group each contributor has made a concerted effort to provide profiles of interfaith activities from the perspective of a sociologist of religion or as an observer. As such, each source offers much for

understanding the characteristics and developments of approaches to interfaith work including:

- descriptions of the various types of dialogue
- insight as to the organizational structure supporting interfaith encounters
- particular geographical developments within the interfaith movement

3.2.1 Types of Dialogue

In considering the types of dialogues found within the interfaith movement there are many similarities to the motivations examined in the previous section. What is distinctive to a focus on the type of approach is that there are more defined parameters in which the interfaith encounter occurs. For example, in the 2007 book by Kate McCarthy entitled *Interfaith Encounters in America,* McCarthy dedicated the first chapter of the book to discussing the "experts" map of interfaith relations. Within the chapter McCarthy offers descriptions of several types of dialogues that can take place in an interfaith encounter, a list that is confirmed and supplemented by other scholars writing about the interfaith movement (Ariarajah 1999; Ata 2003; Ayoub 2004; Brodeur 2005; King 2011; Michel 2002; Miller 1986; Pedersen 2004; Prager and Mays 2008; Singh and Schick 2001; Smith 2007; Swidler 2008; Teasdale 2004). That is, while some of the more formal interfaith initiatives might focus on a specific issue, it is possible that on the individual level, one may engage in more than one type of dialogue when encountering someone from another faith tradition. The types of dialogues most commonly identified by the above authors include:

1) *Parliamentary-style Dialogue:* the encounter is mediated through a formal process that brings together religious leaders and scholars who present papers on particular subjects for discussion during question and answer or round table sessions. Observers take from the presentations ideas for further discussion within religious communities or smaller dialogue circles (King 2011, 102).

2) *Dialogue of Education*: focus of encounter is on increasing one's basic knowledge about religious beliefs and practices of the religious other. This dialogue is often pursued within a formal setting (place of worship or conference hall), where experts of the tradition present a lecture on a specific subject and follow up with question/answer period with participants.

3) *Dialogue of Life:* focus of encounter is on performing a task or responding to an issue that impacts the larger community. For example people of diverse faith traditions might come together to organize a soup kitchen or support program to assist those community members in need, or to raise awareness of inequities in social policies considered by various levels of government (e.g., zoning laws for religious buildings to religious profiling by border guards).

4) *Dialogue of Belief:* focus of encounter is on comparing and contrasting foundational beliefs and practices of the religious traditions represented around the table. This is often the most formal and academic of interfaith encounter due to the high degree of religious knowledge one must possess to contribute in a meaningful way.

5) *Dialogue of the Spirit:* focus of encounter is on shared spiritual practices most notably, creating and participating in interfaith rituals. For example, the 2003 text by Patrice Brodeur provides a detailed description of the various steps and strategies interfaith groups may consider in building their own interfaith shared worship celebrations (Brodeur 2003).

6) *Dialogue of Peace:* focus of encounter is to find pathways away from conflict while also addressing the difficult questions that arise from such situations. This is often one of the more emotional dialogue situations. When conflict flares, the dialogue effort may be suspended, sometimes indefinitely. For example, in the wake of the July 2006 Lebanese / Israeli war, many interfaith groups across Canada were in 'shock'. This was especially the case for many bi-lateral dialogue groups with Jewish participants who ended up suspending dialogue activities until well into the fall (Interviews Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver).

7) *Dialogue of Witness or Persuasion*: not often discussed within most writings on interfaith due to the focus of the encounter as one in which the desire of participants is to use the encounter as an opportunity to proselytize one's faith to the other. Jane Smith described such dialogues as often following a debate style, the purpose of which is to prove "the truth of one's own faith and the consequent falsity of the other" (Smith 2007, 65). Although many within the interfaith movement frown on this approach, as Smith explained it has been a "tried and

true, indeed legitimate, way in which Muslims and Christians have squared off against one another since the earliest days of Islam" (ibid).

8) *Internal Dialogue*: Sallie King includes this in her 2011 list of dialogue types to recognize the process many participants experience as a result of interfaith dialogue. As King explains, this dialogue is "an internal conversation between two religions to which he or she has been exposed, ordinarily at some depth and over some time" (King 2011, 102).

Additional forms of dialogue not clearly identified in the literature, but nonetheless a feature of interfaith work include:

9) *Intrafaith Dialogue*: As with the internal dialogue above, while not strictly interfaith in nature, there is increasing recognition within interfaith efforts of the need to encourage intrafaith or ecumenical discussions about establishing more positive religiously guided approaches to interfaith relations.

10) *Dialogue of Government Obligation*: focus of encounter is for governments to establish interfaith councils who offer guidance and advice for meeting the essential needs of each religious community. Such committees provide forums for government institutions to determine respectful and appropriate responses to free expression of religion, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

3.2.2 Guidelines for Dialogue

As discussed in Chapter One, in 1978 Leonard Swidler authored the text "Ground Rules for Interreligious Dialogue" in the journal *Ecumenical Studies.* A revised version was published in 1983 as "Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue" (see Figure 1 on page 59). This second version has been a key tool for many interreligious organizations. According to the Dialogue Institute website, the Dialogue Decalogue has been reproduced in thirty-nine publications in nine languages (Dialogue Institute Website). The Dialogue Decalogue has also been

informally reproduced by many congregations interested in pursuing interfaith dialogue activities - from churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, to gurdwaras and beyond.

For many who look to the *Decalogue* as a guide for negotiating interfaith dialogue, each 'commandment' is understood to be an ideal that can foster respectful engagement and lead to deeper understanding of all partners in dialogue. The *Dialogue Decalogue* has been an inspiration for other guidelines and tools. Within the Dialogue Institute itself, the *Decalogue* has inspired the creation of additional resources including the "Seven Stages of Deep Dialogue" and "Deep Dialogue Mantras" (Dialogue Institute Website, 2013).

Other interfaith organizations have also developed important dialogue tools. For example, NAIN include guidelines for compassionate listening (NAIN website 2013), and the Abrahamic Faiths Peace Making Initiative website offers numerous educational materials as part of their interfaith peacemaking curriculum including guidelines for hosting interfaith meetings and pursuing collaborative action initiatives (Abrahamic Faiths Peace Making Initiative website 2013). As well there are the World Council of Churches and Vatican guidelines (discussed in Chapter Two), that are also regularly referenced by their respective church communities interested in developing interfaith dialogue activities.

Although some may criticize these dialogue tools for being too superficial or relying on platitudes, for those who are entering interfaith work for the first time, the guidelines offer important direction for negotiating diverse religious worldviews in a respectful way.

Missing from the literature are tools that offer clear guidance for negotiating conflict that can occur at the interfaith table, even tables which have clearly endorsed one or more of the above guidelines. Although many identify intrafaith dialogue as key to building positive relations amongst religious people, outside of the formal structures of Christian ecumenical dialogues, there are no clear guidelines for promoting intrafaith dialogue.

3.2.3 Structure of Interfaith Encounters

As with profiles offered in the texts from Chapter Two, several authors have identified a full range of organizational structures to facilitate interfaith encounters. Approaches to interfaith encounters run the gamut from formal to informal, private (invited) to public (open). Older, international organizations tend to follow a quite formal or parliamentary-style structure for encounters whereby individual participants are invited as representatives of specific religious communities. Formal position papers about a specific subject to be discussed at the meeting are drafted and circulated for comments before the event. Directed discussion is key to the meeting with the aim of producing a final draft before the session closes. While efficient in nature, especially in situations where specific tasks are the objective of the encounter, some participants complain that the formal procedures make it difficult to cultivate friendships or engage in dialogue of spirit or dialogue of life discussions (Bharat 2007; McCarthy 2007; Miller 1996; King 2011; Pedersen 2004).

Conversely, there are those interfaith encounters that follow more informal structures allowing individuals to define the parameters of engagement as the encounter unfolds. For example, study groups or conversation circle models, visits to houses of worship, social justice work, and celebrations of sacred music require some logistical planning to initiate but the dialogue is more organic with participants engaged in questions and answers and determining follow-up activities. While this approach certainly offers a great deal of freedom, the lack of direction can contribute to a stagnation of the process that is sometimes difficult for participants to overcome. For example, many interfaith groups often start with rotating visits to each house of worship that sustains the group until the last site is visited. Without follow-up actions the momentum can dwindle or stagnate.

Interfaith organizations may solicit members by invitation only or through open calls to the public at large, but the structure of each interfaith initiative often depends on the motivation for the interfaith groups, the type of dialogue they are promoting and access to available resources.

3.2.4 Approaches to Interfaith: Distinctions in Time and Geographic Location

Several authors offer portraits of interfaith activity around the world. For example studies of interfaith activity from distinct geographic locations include a focus on the United States (McCarthy 2007), the Philippines, Tripoli and Malaysia (Michel 2002), and Kazakhstan (Mulzalevsky 2012). Each author demonstrates that key to the interfaith encounter is the presence of a religiously diverse population.

The 2007 text *Interfaith Encounters in America* by Kate McCarthy offers an extensive profile of interfaith encounters in America. The 227-page text includes chapters dedicated to academic approaches, religion and politics (multi-faith activism), community-based interfaith work, an examination of interfaith marriages and one looking at how the internet continues to shape interfaith encounters. The chapter on scholarship focused primarily on the work of American scholars, especially Christian theologians, concerned with responding to the ever-present reality of religious pluralism. McCarthy offers a thorough account of criticisms lodged against the Knitter tripartite model of exclusive – inclusive – pluralist approaches to the religious other (McCarthy 2007, 14-44). In particular the potential problem of those within the pluralist side of the spectrum is to exclude from dialogue those who hold exclusive or inclusive positions, namely individuals from conservative expressions within most religious traditions. However, at this stage, there is a growing voice that calls for religious leaders, scholars, lay-practitioners to get beyond the debate, to 'dialogue first and theory later' (McCarthy 2007, 36). This call is in part due to what many recognize as a product of being within the early stages of the interfaith movement. That is, time will provide greater opportunity to build more comprehensive models.

McCarthy also cites several scholars who have identified serious challenges facing interfaith work. The near complete absence of women has been highlighted by Ursula King (1998) who was quoted as stating that proof of such absence "can be found in every single book on interfaith dialogue, religious pluralism, the theology of religions, or the 'wider ecumenism' of global interreligious encounter" (McCarthy 2007, 39). A second challenge identified was the need to address questions about representation - how

many Christians are too many? Who speaks for religious communities, especially given that most world religions follow what Kusumita Pederson describes as a 'polycentric' rather than centralized authority structure (ibid, 40)? There are also questions about how to respond to the absence of participants representing minority ethnic and socio-economic communities, as well as those who hold non-religious identities.

In her chapter entitled "Strange Bedfellows", McCarthy highlights how within the United States one can find various multifaith organizations dedicated to political activism which span the political spectrum. On the liberal side of the spectrum there are several liberal leaning social justice organizations including the Chicago-based National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, Green Faith, Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES), and the Interfaith Alliance which claims a membership of 150,000 people "drawn from seventy faith traditions, as well as atheists and agnostics" (ibid, 61). The Interfaith Alliance believes that "religion best contributes to public life when it works for reconciliation, inspires common effort, promotes concern for the less fortunate, and upholds the dignity of all human beings" (ibid, 62). On the other side of the spectrum there are conservative religious expressions which have come together to lobby governments. Examples include the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews who challenge policy on abortion, homosexuality, homosexual marriages, school vouchers and the secularization of society (ibid, 65). The organization includes strong support from Christian Zionists and sponsors several programs that are focused on building relations with Israel (ibid).

McCarthy also dedicates one chapter to grassroots organizations. Citing a 1980 study that identified twenty-four interfaith councils in the United States, such numbers

have grown to over five hundred according to the 2006 Harvard Pluralism Project (ibid, 85). For this text, McCarthy conducted a survey of twenty-five interfaith organizations across the United States. As occurred in Canada during the 1990s, McCarthy confirmed that many ecumenical groups had also transformed into interfaith organizations (ibid, 87). In describing the 'multifaith' nature of any interfaith organization, McCarthy noted it was really dependent upon the religious diversity of the community. That said, most organizations included Protestants, Catholics and Jews as key members, with Unitarians included in fifteen groups, Baha'is and Muslims in fourteen and Buddhists, Hindus, Jains and Sikhs in eight (ibid, 88). Orthodox Christians were included in three groups with Native Americans, Zoroastrians, and Hare Krishna being "represented on one membership roster each" (ibid). Most organizations followed either a social service or dialogue program or a combination of both.

In her chapter on interfaith marriages, McCarthy noted a significant statistical rise in the numbers of interfaith couples in America – "up to 22 percent marry outside their own religious tradition" (ibid, 126). The chapter includes results of a study of nine interfaith couples and analysis of online discussions from interfaith family forums. Findings suggest an overwhelming need for religious communities to provide more resources to assist these couples in negotiating the additional challenges interfaith brings to marriage, including questions related to child rearing, family celebrations and negotiating gender roles.

The final chapter explored the increasing role of the internet as a place for interfaith dialogue (ibid, 169- 197). Citing studies by Pew and Beliefnet, the internet has become a meeting ground for interfaith dialogue. For individuals who do not have the

time to attend or even access interfaith groups where they live, the internet provides opportunities to engage in dialogues with the religious other. McCarthy tracked several interfaith dialogue forums on the Beliefnet website which demonstrated that finding consensus about issues related to faith are as difficult on line as they can be in face-to-face dialogues. Exchanges spanned Knitter's tripartite spectrum of exclusive, inclusive, and pluralist views. In some cases the dialogues tackled themes for which no resolution was found, with several members dropping out. Other forums provided opportunities for participants to educate one another about particular rituals or beliefs held in a particular faith. In all, McCarthy concludes that "for all its tendencies to commodification, unruliness, and self-indulgence, the internet will indeed be a legitimate and important venue for twenty-first century interfaith encounter" (ibid, 197).

This American portraits offer a view of interfaith activity within a Western nation. However, interfaith initiatives are actively pursued the world over. The 2002 article by Thomas Michel, SJ is a case in point. Michel offered insight into the application of four approaches to interfaith encounters found in the Philippines, Tripoli, Malaysia and Japan. In the first example, the Muslim-Christian Agency for Rural Development (MuCard - Philippines), the approach employed was the dialogue of life where Christians and Muslims combined resources and worked together for local community development. The dialogue was not an exchange of philosophical or theological ideas but a commitment to "overcome time-honoured prejudices and to produce concrete improvements in the lot of people" (Michel 2002, 1). The second case presented a joint project of the Vatican and Islamic Call Society (Tripoli), which studied the way religion has been represented in modern communications media. They were particularly interested

in recording the negative depictions of religion within the media, and how those representations were understood within their respective religious communities. The group met several times in Tripoli then Rome and Vienna. The group agreed to jointly protest against inaccurate media portraits to ensure fair representation is met (ibid, 2). Another distinctive initiative focused on the training of Jesuits into a "culture of dialogue" in which Jesuits were encouraged to initiate and support interfaith dialogue. An example offered was a profile of an ongoing dialogue of spirit between Christian and Buddhist monks that has been taking place for more than twenty years. In each case Michel argues that interfaith is not just an activity for academics, as some of the most inspiring interfaith encounters were amongst laypeople whose faith encouraged them to work with others. That being said, Michel does see the merit of academic approaches to interfaith encounters and particularly the need for ongoing education of youth to celebrate the rich diversity of living religious traditions that are practised throughout the world today (Michel 2002, 6).

The desire to promote global security and human development is the mission of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions centered in Astana, Kazakhstan. On May 31, 2012, the fourth congress was held. Organizers explained that Kazakhstan is home to "a largely Muslim yet multi-ethnic population and a secular government keen on leading interfaith dialogue initiatives" (Mulzalevsky 2012, 1). Interestingly, the congress is "not expected to save the world", but to emphasize the need for interfaith dialogue in addressing international issues including tensions between the Muslim world and the West, religion-related trends, and security challenges across regions (ibid). As the organizers stated, "the Congress is not projected to resolve conflicts

or major grievances any time soon, if at all, Astana wants to state strongly that it must make the first step" (ibid, 4).

3.2.5 Observations on Types, Structure and Geographical Distinctions

The modern interfaith movement has grown significantly from the first World Parliament of Religion in 1893. Along the way participants have reflected on the benefits and challenges of interfaith exchange to develop important tools and strategies for bridging religious diversity. As the movement shifted from formal to more grassroots projects, the types of dialogue and organizational structures have also expanded to meet the needs of participants and the greater community. Growth in the global population and increased migration has also provided more opportunities for interfaith encounters, especially in large urban centers, which has motivated more people to become involved in the development and delivery of interfaith work that promotes the positive social capital generated through interfaith cooperation.

However, as the last section on geographical distinctions highlighted, while religious diversity is increasingly common, government and social support of interfaith work remains limited. Perhaps as McCarthy explained, it is just a matter of time. While the modern interfaith movement has been a growing force for over one hundred years, the core group of participants remains quite small in comparison to the larger religious population. There is still work required to grow the movement.

CHAPTER FOUR – BUILDING RELATIONS, CHALLENGES AND GOING FORWARD

The previous chapters provide an overview of the historical development of various organizations, motivations, types and practical approaches which have shaped the global interfaith movement over the twentieth and into the twenty-first century. This chapter reviews a number of resources which offer a more analytical approach to developments within the interfaith movement, from changing social relations to acknowledging pressing issues and challenges, to thoughts for the future both within the interfaith movement and for those studying this new religious voice.

As with previous chapters, many of the resources were written from the late 1990s up to 2011. More than half were written by Christian theologians or religious studies scholars who are also actively involved in interfaith initiatives (Ariarajah 1999; Eck 1985; King (S) 2011; King (U) 1998; Lamb 1984; McCarthy 2007; Morgan 1995; Pedersen 2004). While each author may be considered as providing an emic perspective, the writing suggests a clear attempt to offer an objective assessment of the global interfaith movement that critically examines developments in a given period (see publication dates), identifies issues and obstacles of greatest concern, and offers insightful comments about potential directions for the future. Sources offering clearly etic perspectives in their approach to the subject of interfaith encounter as a contemporary social phenomenon worthy of social scientific study are also considered (Adams 2007; Brown 2002; Jakobsh 2006; Lawrence 2002; Marty 2005; Wuthnow 2005). These authors highlight social attitudes about the religious other that exist in religiously diverse

societies and identify various political and social factors that have and continue to shape the various interfaith encounters examined.

While each author approaches the subject matter from a distinct perspective, many identify similar relationship challenges, issues or concerns, and thoughts for future approaches to interfaith encounters that were also raised by Canadian interviewees. In particular, themes examined in this final chapter profiling the global interfaith movement include:

- Tolerance and Fear– Adams, Lawrence, Marty and Wuthnow
- Friends Along the Way – Dhamma, Farina, Fleischacker, Fredericks
- Obstacles to interfaith – Ariarajah, Eck, Lamb
- Interfaith marriages – Ariarajah, McCarthy
- Role of Women – Ariarajah, Jakobsh and King (U)
- Approaching the Study of Interfaith – Adams, Brown, King (S), Morgan, Pedersen, Wuthnow

4.1 Tolerance and Fear – Adams, Marty, Lawrence and Wuthnow

> Interfaith is way beyond tolerance. Tolerance is the last refuge of the uncommitted. (Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith offers opportunities to address racial discrimination. (Interview Vancouver)

> Dialogue needs to go somewhere. Fear is understandable, but there is a need to go beyond those fears. [A need for] courage, awareness of questions that need to be discussed. (Interview Montreal)

> We live in a cosmopolitan city with access to others. We should take advantage of that opportunity. (Interview Vancouver)

Hostility toward religion is a real issue. (Interview Montreal)

Identifying the religious other as something to fear is an attitude that has been underscored throughout the history of interfaith encounters, often with violent results. This longstanding fear of the religious other is examined in detail by Martin Marty (2005) and Bruce Lawrence (2002). For these authors tension continues to be a suitable descriptor for portraits of interfaith encounters. They examine the divisive nature of exclusive religious views, an aspect of religion that is either superficially recognized in many interfaith activities or ignored altogether. Marty examines in some detail how the exclusive view develops in a religion as a means to strengthen one's commitment to the "group" (Marty 2005, 16). Such faith-based identities have also served to dehumanize the other especially in times of political conflict. Even in non-violent situations the religious other is often subject to negative labels. As Lawrence explains in his book *New Faiths, Old Fears,* while the phenomenon of global migration is embraced by many as a positive contribution to the social fabric, for as many or more, it raises questions and concerns about integration and accommodation of "others" whose beliefs and practices are so different from the host community (Lawrence 2002, 53). And while both Marty and Lawrence acknowledge shifts in attitudes about the religious other, prompted in part by interfaith activities, exclusivist attitudes persist and will continue to cause concern for the interfaith objective to celebrate the religious other globally.

However, this persistence of such exclusive attitudes is challenged in studies conducted by both Michael Adams (2007) and Robert Wuthnow (2005). Both authors conducted extensive sociological studies of attitudes about religious diversity: Adams

working within the Canadian context, and Wuthnow building a portrait of American responses. While the results of each study understandably differ due to the type of religious populations and commitment levels, both authors recognize significant trends toward more tolerant attitudes of religious others, even amongst those identified as upholding an exclusive attitude. For example, while Wuthnow recognized that in America minority religious communities continue to struggle with the ongoing challenges of racism and discrimination, in general his study demonstrates that most Americans support the right of all Americans to freedom of religion regardless of tradition, even Christians who hold to mostly exclusivist views (Wuthnow 2005, 188-229). Adams echoes the findings of Wuthnow in that he also recognizes a noticeable increase in Canadian tolerance of immigrants and the religious other. Such a shift may be in part a result of the federal policy in support of multiculturalism which has promoted diversity as a positive characteristic of Canadian society for almost forty years. It may also reflect the comfort level that many immigrant communities are realizing in recent times as communities meet critical mass populations which allow them to maintain stability in servicing both religious and social needs. Adams notes that positive attitudes about diversity are particularly noticeable in the under thirty-five demographic which includes those who has been enculturated into a normative attitude of about diversity including religious diversity (Adams 2007, 38). Such findings do not negate the tension and fear of the religious other that exists within some circles of society. Instead both studies provide quantitative data to demonstrate that it is not the dominant attitude in either Canada or America. What was not clear in either study however, was how interfaith activities have contributed to this shift in social attitude.

4.2 Friends Along the Way

> Interfaith dialogue allows us to humanize the other. Understanding leads to acceptance. Acceptance leads to friendships. We learn to both negotiate and celebrate difference. (Interview Halifax)

> Better to know a Buddhist than Buddhism! (Interview Vancouver)

> Crisis can be resolved due to friendships and commitment developed. National committee crisis made it through due to friendships. … It is most important to build up friendships and confidence to go forward. Building friendships allows us to keep growing and contributing. (Interview Montreal)

> Dialogue can't be done as a group. Must be individual friends. (Interview Montreal)

> Interfaith group members are loyal to each other. (Interview Vancouver)

> The Muslim / Jewish division is gone in a group of friends. Interfaith dialogue has allowed us to keep growing and contributing. (Interview Montreal)

One positive outcome of interfaith work acknowledged by many participants is the development of deep friendships (Bharat and Bharat 2007; Brodeur 2005; Fleischacker 2005; Fredericks 1998; Knitter 2005; Patel 2007; Pedersen 2004; Winter 2008; Interviews Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). As the previous chapters described, there are several long-standing interfaith organizations with members who have been active for many years. For those practitioners, what started as a first encounter with a stranger – a religious other, has over time developed into deep friendships which have been enriching on multiple levels – spiritual, social, and personal. Interreligious friendship provides important opportunities for deeper learning about the sacred doctrine, rituals and values of other religious traditions from a practitioner perspective. As James Fredericks explained, one can learn much about other religions without the need to

befriend a practitioner, but it is through interreligious friendships that religious traditions "become present to us in the spontaneity of human speech and action and are no longer constrained by the limits of text" (Fredericks 1998, 167). Fredericks even suggests interreligious friendship should be recognized as a new theological virtue by Christians and all religious people (ibid, 160). Interfaith friendships embody the value of tolerance and imply a "conjunction of values and skills" (ibid).

Building bridges across faith traditions has become easier in the closing decades of the twentieth century. As Rewata Dhamma explained, increased access to the religious other has provided more opportunity to gain an appreciation of other people's cultures, social and political systems and religious beliefs (Dhamma 1997, 48). As an active Buddhist practitioner, Dhamma points to Buddhist teachings that encourage interfaith friendships as a way to both better understand and respect the religious other and to better understand and respect one's own traditions (ibid).

Paul Knitter suggests interreligious friendships go beyond respect to recognize something that is both between and within religions - a recognition of something common, something universal, something more than just our differences that brings people together (Knitter 2005, 39-40). As he states,

> In the otherness of my religious friend I find differences that I will never be able to include neatly in my limited categories, but at the same time I can talk with, learn from, and respond to this stark otherness. In the face of the religious other I see or sense the face of the Other that shines within and beyond us all.
>
> Knitter 2005, 40

Sam Fleischacker takes interreligious friendship even further, suggesting that in some cases, the pursuit of interfaith friendship is more important than the pursuit of

justice. Fleischacker explains that concepts of justice can be controversial on many issues and "decent people can disagree very deeply about what is just" (Fleischacker 2005, 27). Fleischacker argues that resolution starts from a framework of friendship in which individuals get to know one another, learn to respect and understand each other's views, then work towards consensus on issues of justice (ibid). In support of his position he quotes Aristotle from Book Eight of the *Nichomachean Ethics:*

> Friendship seems to hold states together, and lawgivers to care more for it than for justice. When [people] are friends they have no need of justice, while when they are just they need friendship as well … and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality. (NE VIII.1, 1155a21-7).
>
> Fleischacker 2005, 26

4.3. Obstacles –Ariarajah, Eck, Lamb

> There is a danger of dialogue being too focused on theory or dogma of faith. We need to focus on daily issues / problems we all face. (Interview Toronto)

> How do we live in a diverse multifaith world? We need to address that. (Interview Montreal)

> In all interfaith organizations they are invariably speaking to the converted. We need to outreach to conservatives. We should spend more time with our brothers and sisters who disagree with us. (Interview Vancouver)

Several authors have acknowledged the positive contribution interfaith activities have made in fostering an attitude of tolerance and acceptance of religious diversity. However, there remain many obstacles that continue to hinder progress within interfaith initiatives, organizations and the movement as a whole.

Ariarajah, a Methodist Minister from Sri Lanka who has served as Director of the World Council of Churches Committee for Dialogue with Persons of Living Faiths, and more recently as Professor of Ecumenical Theology at the Drew University Theological School, has written or edited many articles and books about interfaith encounters. In his 1999 text *Not Without My Neighbour: Issues in Interfaith Relations,* Ariarajah draws upon over forty years of active experience in formal and informal interfaith initiatives to outline seven key issues which require attention from those pursuing interfaith relations including:

1. the need to build a community of conversations;
2. to teach diversity as natural and normal;
3. to respond to the rise in fundamentalism and militant expressions of religion that often rely on differences to further their agendas of conflict;
4. to strive for equitable access to interfaith conversations both in terms of gender and marginalized voices;
5. to engage in more active responses against socio-political injustices, religiously-based or not;
6. to better service the spiritual and practical needs of individuals joined in interreligious marriages;
7. for all religious peoples to adopt a mission of dialogue.

Ariarajah 1999, 3-9

In response to such obstacles Ariarajah often makes the call for religious people to "educate, educate, educate" (ibid, 7). Educate individuals within faith traditions about the diversity of expressions found within all faith communities. Educate religious leaders to promote attitudes found within all faith traditions that support diverse religious expressions in the effort to counter exclusivist views. Educate the general public, especially the youth, to counter the religious illiteracy that is growing particularly in Western culture where rising secular, technological and global 'culture' is dominant (ibid, 9).

While the call to educate the general public against religious illiteracy is important, religious leaders have also expressed a need for more tools to better understand the importance of interfaith and to better serve interfaith communities. In a 1984 paper on the subject, Christopher Lamb, an intercity Anglican Priest wrote one of the first academic papers that called attention to the gulfs between theologies of pluralism produced in libraries with the need to negotiate "day-to-day relationships with actual Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist people and communities, and to take practical decisions that continually lay you open to accusations of either racism – if you seem opposed to some aspects of other faiths—or syncretism, if you seem too accommodating" (Lamb 1984, 156). Lamb explained that given the 1944 Education Act in Britain which required compulsory daily assembly for worship, and that the religious population in schools was increasingly diverse, how should the assigned minister meet the differing religious needs of the community? (ibid, 157). As well, given that ministers are often called upon to mediate or advise on issues of conflict, Lamb asks how they should react to questions such as:

> What advice should be given to a Muslim girl student who asks for help because the family wants to marry her to a man she does not know? How does the local Christian church help to fight racial harassment and abuse? Should Christians be instrumental in securing access for those of other faiths to the local media, radio, press, and television?"
>
> Lamb 1984, 158

Lamb acknowledged that there was a growing scholarship, but that much of it was in a form not accessible to the busy practitioner who wants to know "not only *what* we can believe, but how we should hold our faith – privately or aggressively, implicitly or explicitly, arrogantly or neurotically?" (ibid, author's emphasis).

Although Lamb raised his concerns in 1984, the need continues as is indicated by Diana L. Eck in her 2003 essay "Religious Pluralism, on the Ground and in the Pulpit". Like Lamb, Eck calls for Christian theologians, church leaders, educators and members of congregations to be more engaged in relations with people and communities of other faiths. Eck acknowledges that within theological discourse there is a large body of work dedicated to negotiating theological conversations across religious boundaries (citing authors like Paul Knitter, Frank Clooney, Wesley Ariarajah, John Hick and Cobb), but openly wonders "to what extent these theologians are studied as part of an essential theological curriculum today?" (Eck 2003, 169). In support of that effort, Eck poses four questions she believes each new theologian should wrestle with both intellectually and practically i.e., present the response at the pulpit. The blunt and demanding questions are:

1. Where was God on September 11?
2. Is Allah God?
3. Can we Pray Together?
4. Who is My Neighbour?

Although the questions pose significant challenges, Eck suggests they are necessary as they meet the issues asked by many in the pew and reflect the growing religious diversity that many congregations meet every day. Eck makes the clear call for Christian theologians and leaders to:

> …remove the blinders that have constricted our vision and to stop imagining that we, as Christians, are alone in the universe of faith and in the world of theological reflection. It is time to stop imagining that God observes the boundaries we set and to think afresh about what Christian faith and commitment really means in a world of many faiths. … the world of faiths is not a threat to a vital faith in Jesus Christ. It is rather a testimony to the enormous creativity of the one God who is made known to us Christians in Jesus Christ as the God who lives and acts in total freedom.
>
> Eck 2003, 178

4.4. Personal Motivations (especially interfaith marriages) - Ariarajah, McCarthy

> Interfaith marriage is a constant negotiation. It is a constant process of dismantling your own barriers. (Interview Montreal)

Interfaith marriage is perhaps the most intimate form of interfaith encounter and one that is increasingly prevalent in the age of global migrations. It is also the most studied.[16] Both Ariarajah (1999) and McCarthy (2007) also consider this rising phenomenon and both recognize the need for more concerted efforts by religious communities to service the spiritual needs of these couples. As Ariarajah explained, too often individuals within interfaith marriage experience an extreme "sense of isolation, even abandonment…precisely at the time when the couple need guidance, support and help" (Ariarajah 1999, 95). Both Ariarajah and McCarthy offer examples of couples who have successfully traversed the sometimes rocky road of interfaith marriage, managing to foster a healthy awareness of both religious identities in their children. However, both authors also explained that more often than not the interfaith couple adopts a neutral stand about religion and children are raised outside any faith community. Ariarajah argues such results suggest religious leaders must do more to make room for interfaith couples and their children to participate in the religious life of the community (ibid).

[16] In research searches for articles and books about "interfaith", interfaith marriage accounts for more than half of the results with the majority of them concerned with the Christian-Jewish marriage.

4.5. Role of Women – Ariarajah, Jakobsh and King

> Interfaith are too often formal forums usually of religious leaders and academics who are men. Where are the women? (Interview Vancouver)

> Muslim women desperately need a voice. (Interview Montreal)

A significant issue of concern raised by Ariarajah, Jakobsh and King is the problem of gender inequity found within many interfaith organizations, especially formal international initiatives. As Ursula King explained:

> Such narrowness is evident with regard to the marginalization, invisibility and exclusion of women, for wherever interreligious dialogue has developed, women seem to have had little part in it, at least at the official level. Proof for this is found in every single book on interfaith dialogue, religious pluralism, the theology of religions, or the 'wider ecumenism' of global interreligious encounter.
>
> King U. 1998, 42

While grassroots initiatives tend to be more balanced in gender distribution of Christian participation, non-Christians participants are most often men. This may be due in part to the impression by many that interfaith participants should be well-versed in their respective communities and that in many traditions men hold the position of authority in religious affairs. However, several authors have noted an increase in women-led interfaith activities, especially conversation circles (Jakobsh 2006; Winter 2009). For example, in her 2006 article, Doris Jakobsh offered portraits of several interfaith dialogue groups initiated by Sikh women, both in Western countries and the Punjab (Jakobsh 2006).

In tandem with the call for greater representation of women's voices, several authors have also recognized that there is a greater need for more directed outreach to religious communities who are marginalized due to race, ethnicity and lower socio-economic status, to ensure their voices are present around the table.

4.6. Approaches to the Study of Interfaith – Adams, Brown, Morgan, Wuthnow

> I am leery of interfaith. It is too often a basic introduction to symbols of other traditions. Dialogue sessions are usually by male leaders talking about their traditions to each other in front of mostly passive and white audiences who are Christian and aged. For interfaith to work we need to understand its relation to post-colonial influences. (Interview Vancouver)
>
> Interfaith is quite new. It is a pioneering activity. Need to ask how is your religious community dealing with pluralism? What initiatives have you been doing to address diversity? (Interview Montreal)
>
> I am more interested in approaching interfaith through Religious Studies than Theology. (Interview Toronto)
>
> The scholarly world is looking for something new to study. (Interview Montreal)

In each of the above sections, authors provide important initial assessments of interfaith encounters which will prove invaluable in the future study of this new religious phenomenon. However, the contributions by Adams (2007), Brown (2002), Morgan (1993), Pedersen (2004), and Wuthnow (2005), not only contribute to our current understanding of interfaith encounters but provide structure for approaching the study itself.

In her 1995 article "The Study of Religions and Interfaith Encounter", Peggy Morgan explored various questions about the role of the religious studies scholar who attends, participates and/or observes interfaith activities. She asks questions such as is the declaration of membership in a faith community necessary for the academic who participates in interfaith activities? What are the ethical considerations of the academic participant who conducts research at such meetings? What role should the academic play? (Morgan 1995, 157). Morgan recognizes that scholars bring a level of expertise to any interfaith activity acting as a resource for participants either through the presentation of papers or as a member of the audience. However, many scholars may be uncomfortable with requests to declare a faith identity when participating in interfaith activities, concerned that such a declaration may taint the research field and/or the data collected. Such concerns were especially important given the 1993 publication date of the essay. As mentioned previously, interfaith activities up to the 1990s were primarily formal international initiatives that relied heavily on scholarly approaches to dialogue, thus many of the participants were scholars within their faith tradition (mostly Christian theologians), and in the latter decades, scholars of religion. It is those from the latter group to whom Morgan directed her concerns.

In the essay Morgan also provided very practical advice for the scholar studying interfaith activities. She identified key questions to explore, most notably who is attending and conversely who is not. That is, if attendance at an activity is by invitation, try to determine who was invited (religious tradition, status, age, gender, etc.), who accepted and who attended. As Morgan explained, if an invitation that was sent to the

Archbishop of Canterbury is accepted, who is it that is assigned to attend? Did the invitee volunteer? What is the participant's status within the Church? (Morgan 1995, 162).

Morgan also encourages the scholar to probe into who was invited but did not attend and why? and who was not invited, specifically which religious traditions/ communities were not invited and why? Answers to these questions allow scholars to assess the potential impact the activity may have as a stand-alone event, in relation to other interfaith activities and the potential influence such participation might have on the religious community of the attendee.

Morgan suggests the question of potential influence is of great importance to our understanding of how interfaith activity contributes to the complex and shifting nature of religious beliefs. She argues that respectful interfaith encounters are often a significant factor in the mutation of a religious attitude about the other due to the need for participants to listen attentively to the other and "adapt their language and ideas to accommodate and interest the other" (ibid, 163). Morgan cautions scholars to recognize that participants are inclined to offer portraits of their faith tradition that reflect the "best of the tradition" (ibid). Often participants will try to convey the essence of their religion in simple terms such as "Islam is a religion of peace", or as the Dalai Lama once said "my religion is kindness" (ibid, 164). Likewise participants might select passages from their sacred scriptures that best demonstrate the unifying and accepting nature of the tradition while avoiding controversial passages from the same texts.

Another area worthy of observation is the language employed at interfaith gatherings, some of which Morgan identifies as para-theological and confessional (ibid,

166). One would think it would not be uncommon to hear such sentiments expressed at gatherings of religious peoples. However, Morgan emphasizes the need to record such expressions, especially those that appear to supersede individual faith traditions and strive for unification of all religions. Analysis of such expressions of unity not only highlight mutations of religious attitudes within particular religious traditions, but in some cases may point to the development of a belief system premised on interfaith relations that could be recognized as a new religious identity (ibid).

Like Morgan in 1995, Pedersen in 2004 provides a framework of areas to consider when studying the interfaith movement. Pederson suggests that the term "movement" best describes the "horizontal" nature of the thousands of interfaith projects and organizations (from formal international to informal grassroots), who use similar methods directed towards similar goals but with no single organization or bureaucracy providing coordination or direction (Pedersen 2004, 77). In locating the emergence and growth of interfaith activity, Pedersen suggests the strongest catalyst is the existence of a multireligious population where religious minorities have a vested interest to promote positive relations amongst religious communities, for example, "Christians in Asia; Muslims, Buddhists, or Hindus in Western countries; and Jews in Christian-majority countries" (ibid, 87). In contrast, areas where populations are more religiously homogenous, motivations for interfaith activity are often too abstract for activities to develop (ibid). Likewise, in countries where governments or religious authorities deny freedom of religion and belief, interfaith activity is near impossible. Conflict or tension amongst religious communities or with the larger civic community has also been seen to

be a compelling reason for interfaith cooperation, whereas, the absence of conflict can sometimes even reduce motivation for participation (ibid).

Malcolm D. Brown employs an ethnographic approach to his study of interfaith encounters that considered a wide range of non-religious social factors as central to the development of interfaith relations. In his study of "Muslim-Christian Dialogue in the North of France", he identified the political environment in France as having a significant influence on the nature of interfaith activity. France upholds a political structure that embraces the concept of *laïcité*. While *laïcité* is often equated with the concept of secularism, Brown distinguishes between the two, identifying the former as a juridical principle in which religious thinking, practice and institutions have lost much of their legal significance in French society (Brown 2002, 7). Such distinction has proved particularly difficult for Muslims living in France who try to assert their right to religious liberty. However, as Brown explained, Muslims have found partners for their efforts in Christian communities who are also concerned with the limitations the French government has imposed on their religious expression in public. As such the political situation has created interfaith alliances that are forged not along confessional lines but in the effort to promote dialogue that followed practical, formal and bilateral lines (Brown, 10). This is in contrast to interfaith activities in Britain which Brown described as being more theoretical, informal and multilateral. As he explained, while religious communities in Britain share similar concerns to resist secularization, they do not have to contend with the extra pressure of government sponsored initiatives to keep religious expression a private affair (ibid, 16). As a result, interfaith in Britain tends to be multi-lateral or includes individuals from three or more religious traditions whose efforts tend to center

on countering social justice issues contrary to the shared values of the participants – such as abortion, religious education and poverty. The study by Brown reminds those studying the interfaith movement that comparative studies can offer important insight for assessing the various religious and non-religious factors that shape the development of interfaith activities. In particular, it is important to recognize the role of the political landscape.

Wuthnow (2005) and Adams (2007) also offered important examples of how quantitative and qualitative research can provide rich portraits of social attitudes about interfaith relations. While the studies by both Adams and Wuthnow point to important trends in attitudes toward religious diversity in Canada and America, this is not the key focus for Adams. Instead, Adams considers the impact of the multiculturalism policy promoted by the Canadian federal government over the past thirty years on Canadian attitudes about the "other" (Adams 2007, 15). In general, his data demonstrates that the Canadian population is not only one of the most ethnically pluralistic nations in the world[17], but also the most accepting of diversity[18]. Adams does examine in detail attitudes expressed by individual Canadians with Muslim identities looking specifically for shifts that may have been caused due to the often negative portraits of the faith that have been presented in the media since the events of 9/11. In all, Adams demonstrated that while Canadian Muslims have experienced increased acts of discrimination, many recognize such acts as isolated incidents. The findings also point to significant

[17] Toronto is the most ethnically diverse city in the world with fourteen ethnic communities representing more than 1% of the overall population. Miami and Vancouver are tied with nine ethnic communities claiming +1% status (Adams, 58-59).

[18] In an international Social Trends survey that examined attitudes toward immigrants, Canada posted the highest score for claiming that immigrants have a good influence on society (75% compared with the closest nation Australia at 50%), and the lowest score for claiming that immigrants have a bade influence on society (20% compared to the closest nation Italy at 40%) (Adams, 15).

differences in attitudes that most often follow generational lines with those in the under thirty-five age category expressing the most acceptance for diversity in society (Adams 2007, 38)

Wuthnow provides us with a more systematic study of attitudes about diversity categorized along religious lines. As a renowned sociologist of religion, Wuthnow is no stranger to large-scale studies of religious attitudes and uses his expertise to produce what will surely be a pivotal study in future research on religious diversity. The study was the product of a six-year research project that drew from over 250 in-depth interviews with religious leaders and practitioners from fourteen urban centers in the United States, and a random telephone survey of almost 3000 (Wuthnow 2005, 5). With the data Wuthnow built profiles of practising Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities and analyzed their responses to growing religious diversity in America. For an historical perspective, the study also examined hundreds of primary and secondary documents, from the founding days of Columbus to the present day, which provided a comprehensive overview of the evolution of American responses to religious diversity. While obviously focused on American society, his approach to the study offered a clear methodology for building portraits of attitudes about religious diversity from the local through to national levels.

4.7. Going Forward

The study of interfaith work is a new area of research, and each of the above authors reminds us that the field is rich and complex and can be approached from

multiple perspectives. Each author recognizes the need to continue research efforts, especially in this age of global migration where the opportunities for individuals to experience an interfaith encounter are increasing daily. While most authors view this as a positive characteristic of contemporary society, several remind researchers of the importance for scholars to be objective in both the collection and analysis of data, and to be cautious about the optimism that often permeates interfaith activities.

The resources referenced in this and previous chapters also reinforce the importance for researchers to pay attention to the history of interfaith activity, organizational structure and motivation for interfaith work. This includes collecting demographic details of participants for identifying trends. Consideration of the various methods employed by interfaith organizations to attract members has also been recognized as critical; note who is invited, who is not, who attends and who does not attend. Studies need to identify the various tactics used by organizations to develop and promote interfaith activities with specific attention to the outcomes including tracking participation or access to resources if an online platform is used. External factors, especially political tension, should also be considered as important variables in the development of interfaith organizations. Comparisons with other interfaith organizations or interfaith activity in other regions can also be a useful strategy for identifying trends in successes, issues and challenges within the interfaith movement in general and when studying developments in a particular nation or region. The following study of the Canadian interfaith movement has benefitted from this sage advice for collecting, ordering and analyzing data from the field.

The themes expressed within the Canadian context resonate with developments in the global interfaith movement. They share a similar history, motivations, types, approaches and concerns. There are also clearly issues and challenges that require attention for the movement to grow and meet the objective of becoming a social norm. Nonetheless, active participation is found within grassroots, scholarly and government sponsored interfaith initiatives which promote cooperation and community building across religious traditions.

Part two has offered a profile of the global interfaith movement as a new religious voice that is worthy of further study. As is often the case with scholarship, there was a common call for more research to better understand the development of this new religious voice in various locations. Part three responds to that call by providing a portrait of the interfaith movement as it has manifested within the Canadian context.

PART THREE - THE INTERFAITH MOVEMENT IN CANADA [19]

In Canada, where one's religious identity is more often a private affair, interfaith organizations provide one of the few public forums where an individual is encouraged to affirm a religious conviction. As may be expected given the geographical expanse of Canada, interfaith activities in different regions are distinctive due to variations in religious populations and pressing political and social concerns.

Part Three aims to contribute to the collective knowledge about the global interfaith movement by providing a descriptive profile of the character and development of the interfaith movement in Canada. This profile is focused primarily on publicly declared interfaith organizations – government sponsored, academic and grassroots, as they offer the most visible effort of intentional cooperation of diverse religious communities. Such organizations or activities may include participants from two specific faith traditions (e.g., Canadian Council of Christians and Jews), or expand the membership roster to include participants who come from multiple faith traditions. However, the study is not a catalogue of interfaith organizations; rather it offers a general portrait of the range of religious voices and initiatives that have contributed to the development of the interfaith movement in Canada.

This profile is based on primary data collected through attending several interfaith events as a participant/observer and conducting one hundred and ten in-depth interviews between April 2006 and March 2010 with active participants in publicly recognized

[19] Portions of part two were included in a working paper that was presented to Citizenship and Immigration Canada in 2010. The working paper title was Les espaces de dialogue interreligieux au Canada: États des lieux et suggestions / Spaces of Interreligious Dialogue in Canada: Overview and Suggestions. Lead Researcher was Dr. Patrice Broduer. Laurie Lamoureux Scholes was listed as Lead Collaborator.

interfaith initiatives across Canada, most notably within the large urban centres of Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Initial contacts within each city were identified through internet searches of interfaith organizations. Subsequent interviews with active members were secured using the snowball method (i.e., new interview candidates were referred by the initial contacts).[20]

The interviews followed a two-part process. In the first part, interviewees were asked open survey questions about the interfaith initiatives they have participated in which provided details about the goals, approaches, organizational structure, membership, successes and challenges associated with several local to federal government interfaith councils, academic endeavours, and forty-two grassroots organizations/initiatives. The second part examined the role of personal faith as a motivation for participation in interfaith work and sharing experiences with co-religionists. Questions also explored personal reflections on the successes, issues/concerns and hopes for the future of interfaith work in Canada and globally.

While the pool of interviewees was not exhaustive, it does typify those most engaged with interfaith activity in each city center and includes primary leaders of most organizations. The number and gender breakdown of interviewees from each city are highlighted in Table 8.

[20] As stated above, Peggy Morgan recommends studies to consider both those participating and those who do not. In an attempt to meet this directive, in each city several attempts to secure interviews with individuals from conservative or ethnic religious communities not associated with known interfaith organizations were pursued but with limited success.

Table 8
Canadian Interfaith Practitioners Interviewed – by City and Gender

City	Interviewees	Male	Female
Calgary	3	1	2
Edmonton	5	3	2
Halifax	23	18	5
Montreal	18	13	5
Ottawa	2	2	
Toronto	23	17	6
Vancouver	30	15	15
Victoria	6	6	
Total	**110**	**75**	**35**

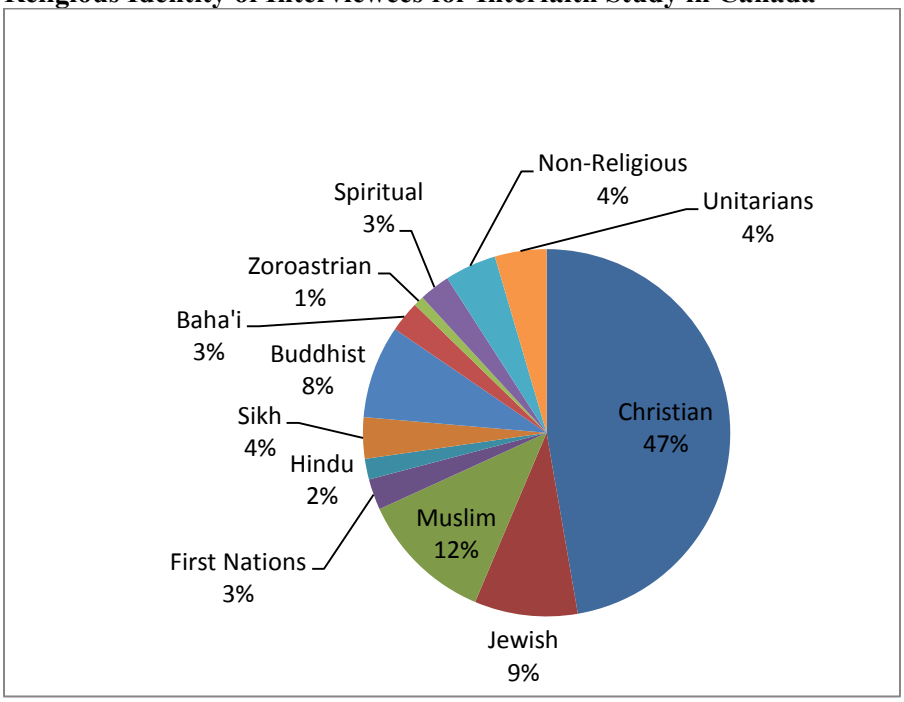
The pool included individuals whose main association with interfaith work was in the role of: administrator of interfaith spaces, advisory committees, and/or chaplaincies (6); chaplains for universities, healthcare, military or prisons (15); religious leaders (22), scholar/practitioners (13), and laypersons or practitioners (54). The age of interviewees spans from twenty-five years to eighty years with the majority in the forty to seventy year age range (see Table 9).

Table 9
Canadian Interfaith Practitioners Interviewed – by Age

Age Range	Number
Under 30 yrs	4
31 to 39 yrs	15
40 to 49 yrs	37
50 to 59 yrs	29
60 to 69 yrs	18
Over 70 yrs	7

The religious identity of interviewees is also diverse (see figure 2).

Figure 2
Religious Identity of Interviewees for Interfaith Study in Canada



Not surprisingly, Christians represent the dominant group with fifty-two interviewees hailing from diverse denominations, with Anglicans, United Church and Roman Catholics accounting for thirty-five of the interviews collected (Anglicans – 12; Baptist – 1; Coptic – 1; Christians – 2; Evangelical – 3; Greek Orthodox – 1; Lutheran – 1; Mormon – 1; Presbyterians – 1; Roman Catholic – 12; United Church – 11). The designation of Unitarians is an ongoing debate for many interfaith organizations, however for the purposes of this study they are understood as a distinct religious designation with five participating in the interview process. Ten interviewees identified as Jewish, a number split between Reform (5), Orthodox (3), and Conservative (2), traditions. There were thirteen Muslims included, the majority holding a Sunni identity (10), two Suffi and one Ismaili. Interviewees from the following religious traditions also participated:

Native Spirituality (3), Hinduism (2), Sikhism (4), Buddhists (9), Baha'i (3), Zoroastrian (1), Spiritual (3), and administrative role with no specified religion (5).

The primary data was complemented by an examination of scholarly literature, self-published interfaith promotional materials, conference proceedings and websites about interfaith initiatives within Canada. Results have been organized into the following chapters:

Chapter Five – Historical Development of Canadian Interfaith Movement

Chapter Six – Interfaith Work: Government, Scholarship and Grassroots

Chapter Seven – Regional Profiles: Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Halifax

Chapter Eight – Profiles of Canadian Interfaith Participants

CHAPTER 5: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANADIAN INTERFAITH MOVEMENT

The Canadian interfaith movement shares much with global interfaith movement. This chapter opens by highlighting the historical development of interfaith activity in Canada, followed by review of typical motivations and institutional frameworks found within interfaith organizations.

5.1. Interfaith History in Canada

The history of the interfaith movement in Canada follows a similar trajectory as the global interfaith movement, however on a smaller scale and with limited activity until after the Second World War.

5.1.1 Phase One – Pre-Confederation to the 1960s

Pre-confederation encounters between First Nations People, French Catholic and British Anglican colonizers could be described as a coming together of distinct religious communities, but 'tense' and 'inequitable' best describes these early interfaith relations. French Catholic and later Protestant encounters with First Nations were marked by a missionary zeal to convert this "heathen" population to the one true faith of Christianity (Choquette 2004, 80), an attitude that characterized relations amongst these communities, even after the mass conversion of most First Nations people, until well into the latter half of the twentieth century. The strained relations between Catholic and Protestant

expressions of Christianity which coloured the often tense relations between the founding nations of England and France, were also present in the early contact between the two colonies in Canada limiting the development of cooperative or respectful interfaith relations. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century waves of immigration to Canada not only contributed to the development of diverse ethnic Christian and non-Christian religious communities but also gave rise to tensions between the newcomers and more established communities. In particular Jews and immigrants from Asia were subjected to some of the more blatant discrimination[21] ever adopted into public policy (for more see Biles 2005, 157; Banerjee and Coward 2005, 40; Ravvin 2005, 119).

It is in the years leading up to the Second World War that there are the earliest signs of public interfaith efforts dedicated to working toward better relations between religious communities. For example, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in the 1930s created a series of advisory boards with leaders from Catholic, Anglican, and Jewish religious communities who provided guidance for the respectful treatment of issues related to various religious communities. These groups continued until well into the 1990s when budget cuts forced their demise (Interviews Montreal, Toronto). There was throughout the 1930s also a rise in Christian ecumenical relations, especially among Protestant denominations who eventually established the Canadian Council of Churches

[21] French Catholic and English Protestant Missionary efforts and later operation of Residential Schools for First Nations people (Miller, 2004); English Protestant efforts to "Canadianize" non-English Christian and non-Christian immigrants (Choquette, 2004: 339); the continuous passage legislation passed in 1907 designed to stop the "Hindoo invasion" *(sic)* (Mahmood, 2004: 57); Asians within Canada did not receive the civic right to vote in municipal, provincial or federal elections until 1947 (Banerjee and Coward, 2005: 40); Japanese migrants lost all possessions and were forcibly removed from coastal cities to internment camps in Alberta and the interior of British Columbia (Boisvert, 2005: 81); Canadian Jews have been subjected to discriminatory policies adopted by governments and public institutions including the refusal of Jewish refugees during the Second World War and quotas to limit Jewish student enrolment in universities, a policy in place at McGill University until the 1950s (Ravvin, 2005).

in 1948 with official representative members from most mainline Protestant traditions (Anglicans, Presbyterians, United Church of Canada and Lutherans), several Baptist assemblies and Orthodox Churches. Although the Roman Catholic tradition remained on the margins of these efforts until well after Vatican II (1962-65), these early ecumenical endeavours became a blueprint for later interfaith activities in Canada, some of which were initiated by the same member churches.

Out of the horrors of the WWII developed a committed international effort to bridge relations between Christians and Jews and in 1947 the International Council of Christians and Jews was born in Seelisberg, Switzerland. Very quickly chapters were formed in nations and large cities around the world including Canada. Before the end of 1947 a small group of Christians and Jews from Toronto and Montreal, who had already been meeting informally for a few years, came together to establish the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (CCCJ). The early aims of the organization included the promotion of understanding and cooperation between Christians and Jews, affirmation of human rights and the desire to "counter all forms of prejudice, intolerance, discrimination and misuse of religion..." (CCCJ Website, 2006). Membership in the group included official representative members from various mainline churches (Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Church, Roman Catholic and Anglican), and appointed members from the Canadian Jewish Congress. Over the years the CCCJ has remained a consultative body only with no mandate to take a public position on issues. As such they have not engaged in public interfaith outreach activities, but instead used their dialogue sessions to build a deeper respect and understanding of the two faith traditions amongst the committee members.

The other significant interfaith initiative of the period was the founding of the Institute for Islamic Studies at McGill University by Wilfred Cantwell Smith in 1952. While the focus of the Institute was and continues to be on studies about all facets of Islam and Islamic cultures, Wilfred Cantwell Smith was a respected United Church Christian missionary (seven years in India), who is often recognized as one of the key pioneering players of the contemporary interfaith movement for his dedicated efforts to bridge relationships amongst world religions (Cracknell 2001, 2-7). After seven years on mission in India, Smith received a PhD from Princeton before joining the McGill Faculty of Divinity in 1948 as the WM Birks Professor of Comparative Religion. It was in that capacity that he pursued his interests for studying the history of Muslim people which led to founding the Islamic Institute in 1952 (ibid). As the website for the Institute explains, when Smith was director he would host "a four o'clock tea in which East would meet West as all members of the Institute -- students, librarians and faculty -- would gather together for a time of discussion in order to foster mutual understanding" (McGill Islamic Institute website 2010). After his tenure at McGill, from 1964 to 1973 Smith became the second Director of the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions. He returned to Canada in 1973 where he founded the Department of Religion at Dalhousie University in Halifax. In 1978 Smith once again returned to the Harvard School of Divinity. Smith wrote many texts advocating open dialogue with individuals from other faith traditions including *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (1963), *Religious Diversity: Essays* (1976)*, Faith and Belief* (1979), and *Towards a World Theology: Faith and the Comparative History of Religion* (1981). As one of his students explained, "Before I met Wilfred, I had studied Buddhism as a

system. Under him, I came to appreciate the faith of Buddhists as persons" (Oxtoby 2001, v).

5.1.2 Phase Two – 1960s to 9/11

This period is marked most prominently by a distinctive shift in the statistical portrait of religion in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003). As Table 1 indicates (see page 4 above), from Confederation to the 1960s, more than 96% of the Canadian population identified with a Christian tradition. However, the introduction of the point-system immigration policy during the late 1960s created more equitable opportunities for greater ethnic and religious diversity within the immigrant pool. It is important to note that we are working with significant numbers here as the annual immigration to Canada has steadily increased from an average of 75,000 per annum in 1960s to figures that since 2001 range between 221,352 and 262,236 immigrants per annum – over 9,000,000 people since 1960 (see Table 2 on page 6). As Table 3 indicates (see page 7), religious diversity of immigrants has also increased dramatically. While Christians continue to be the largest pool of immigrants their numbers have dropped from a high of over 80% in 1960 to less than 40% in 2001. During the same period Jewish immigration remained fairly steady at approximately 2%. However, the number of Muslim immigrants increased 75 times from pre-1960 figures. This growth in immigration boosted the overall Muslim population in 2001 to almost 580,000 and over one million in 2011, surpassing Judaism to become the largest non-Christian religion in Canada – see Table 4 (see above page 7). Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh communities have also swelled with the steady inflow of immigrants

who practise these traditions creating sizeable communities, particularly in large urban centers (Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver) where immigrants cluster and develop more visible religious communities (see Chapter Seven below).

While Christian-Jewish dialogues continued to flourish in the period, growth in religious diversity fuelled development of several grassroots interfaith organizations whose directive was to build bridges amongst diverse religious communities and to respond to various issues. Ongoing violence and a global nuclear threat inspired an international effort to bring together religious communities for the purpose of promoting peace. In 1961 the "Religions for Peace" effort began transforming and in 1971 became the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP). Soon after the establishment of this international organization several small but active chapters were formed in various urban centers across Canada including Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver and Calgary, many drawing members from Kairos, a Christian Ecumenical organization also dedicated to promoting peace and found across Canada (Interviews Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver). These organizations were quite active throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, especially among youth. One member recalled fondly the "Canada Peace Bus" project in early 1980s where a bus of WCRP youth travelled across the country from Vancouver, British Columbia to St. John's, Newfoundland (Interviews Montreal). Along the way, the bus stopped in cities where WCRP chapters hosted events including interfaith dinners and discussions (ibid). The project mimicked a similar WCRP Peace Bus project that had travelled from London to Moscow in 1984 (ibid).

Another international interfaith organization that developed roots in Canada was the World Inter-Faith Education Association (WIFEA). WIFEA Victoria was started in

1987. One board member claimed the group at one point had over two thousand members (Interview Victoria). However, by 2006 membership had dwindled to a few board members who agreed to transfer the charitable status by "adopting" the board of the new Victoria Multifaith Society (Interviews Victoria). There was also a Toronto chapter of WIFEA; it too disbanded in 2007 but with no apparent transfer to a replacement interfaith group (Interviews Toronto).

The United Religions Initiative (URI) also includes five community circles on their roster, all within Vancouver. The first was established in 1999. It was the group that hosted 9/11 interfaith services at Christ Church Cathedral. However, as with the Victoria WIFEA chapter, the URI circle members in 2006 folded their organization into the committee working for the Vancouver Interspiritual Centre (Interviews Vancouver).

Another key objective of interfaith activities during this period was the building of bridges with the 'new to Canada' faith communities. For example, in Vancouver on the heels of the first United Nations sponsored World Urban Forum-Habitat conference in 1976, two interfaith organizations were born: the Ecumenical Action Society of British Columbia (since 1997, the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society – VMAS) and the Pacific Interfaith Citizens Association (PICA). Both organizations continue today. From inception, the mandate of each organization has included the objective of raising awareness about the diverse religious traditions practised in the Vancouver area.

The Pacific Interfaith Citizens Association (PICA) grew out of a small group of individuals dedicated to helping new immigrants find places to worship (Interviews Vancouver). Initiated by a Muslim and Catholic priest committed to interfaith, the

monthly meetings brought together Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and Baha'is, where they shared stories of discrimination experienced within their respective communities and discussed possible solutions. What began as essentially a loose-knit support group became a formal interfaith organization dedicated to hosting public awareness events including interfaith education conferences, courses and annual dinners. The formal structure of the organization, with each member appointed to the board of directors by their faith communities, has allowed the organization to participate in provincial and federal government consultations when public input on issues of faith is requested (ibid).

Throughout the 1990s there was also a shift in many Christian ecumenical initiatives towards interfaith awareness. Since the establishment of the World Council of Churches in 1948, and the 1964 Vatican II directive for building ecumenical ties, Canada has been home to many ecumenical groups in cities across the country. The chapters benefited from institutional support that came from local, provincial, national and international levels. The clear structure for organizing dialogues and shared actions was a model that transferred well when many of those same ecumenical groups shifted to an interfaith platform. For example, the Ecumenical Action Society of British Columbia in 1997 shifted official membership to welcome people of diverse faith traditions to participate in their social justice activities and sit on the board of directors. The shift included a name change to the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society (VMAS). Although the organization gained new members it also lost some who were more interested in ecumenical work including the Lutheran and Roman Catholic board members (Interviews Vancouver). Since the shift VMAS has hosted a range of interfaith initiatives including bilateral dialogues, religious sites visits, interfaith dinners and numerous social justice

activities including the management of an interfaith food bank, programs for the homeless, the productions of an interfaith calendar and since 2005 as a lead organizer of the Greening Sacred Spaces project in Vancouver (Interviews Vancouver).

The United Church of Canada in the 1990s also expanded their ecumenical work to include interfaith work. In 1994 the United Church worked with a local Mormon community to host an interfaith festival of the family in Toronto during the International Year of the Family (Interview Toronto). The event brought together dozens of different religious and non-religious people who had "agreed not to proselytize or 'bad mouth' each other" (United Church 1997). The United Church Press also printed two Canadian interfaith resources, *Faith in My Neighbour: World Religions in Canada* (1994) and *Stories in My Neighbour's Faith* (1999). Both texts were distributed widely to churches and libraries across Canada (Interviews Toronto). The United Church has since sponsored several position papers encouraging interfaith work including "Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church - Jewish Relations Today" (1999) and "That We May Know Each Other: United Church - Muslim Relations Today" (2005).

The 1990s shift from ecumenical to interfaith work was particularly evident on university campuses when many chaplaincy programs shifted from a focus on Christian traditions to a multifaith platform that could better serve the spiritual needs of the increasingly pluralistic student bodies. This shift has meant that most chaplaincy programs include religious leaders from all major world traditions either on staff or as volunteer spiritual leaders to serve the spiritual/religious needs of students.

Within scholarly circles, the period saw the development of Religious Studies programs or departments in universities across the country. As mentioned in chapter one, while scholars of religion are not necessarily active within the interfaith movement, they have played a significant role in building accessible and accurate knowledge about diverse religious traditions. Canadian scholars have contributed to this endeavour. With regard to specific studies of interfaith relations, the majority have most often been focused on studying trends in interfaith marriages, however there are notable exceptions. In 1985 the *Ecumenical Review* dedicated an issue to essays about international interfaith dialogue efforts. John Berthrong contributed an essay focused on Canada. As discussed in the introduction, his essay emphasized that within Canada, dialogue efforts were first directed towards Christian Ecumenical initiatives. However, even in 1985, immigration had contributed to significant growth in non-Christian communities throughout Canada, particularly in large urban centres. As Berthrong noted, at the time Toronto was home to the third largest Zoroastrian community in the world (Berthrong 1985, 465). Accounts of several formal bi-lateral dialogue efforts were offered including the above stated Council of Christians and Jews. The essay also noted the recent (in 1985) formation of the Christian-Muslim National Liaison committee which brought together representatives from the Canadian Conference of Churches, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Council of Muslim Communities of Canada. Buddhist-Christian dialogues were also present in Vancouver, Toronto and Halifax, although less formal with a focus more "on meditation and prayer as a common practice" (ibid, 466). Although Berthrong was optimistic about interfaith dialogue efforts in Canada, he cautioned that in 1985, "many

Christians and people of other faiths would not have heard of [interfaith dialogue]" (ibid, 470).

While the mid-1980s may mark a time of limited interfaith activity among Canadians in general, scholars became active in building bridges between faiths. In 1986 John Miller, a professor at the University of Waterloo, edited the text *Interfaith Dialogue: Four Approaches*, in which nine authors examined various bilateral dialogue approaches with a strong emphasis on Christian experience and potentials (Millar 1986). Christian scholars shared reflections on personal interfaith dialogue experiences, such as communal rituals like silent meditations and how they contribute to a greater understanding of personal faith (ibid). This text was followed in 1989 by Volume Two, *Pluralism, Tolerance and Dialogue: Six Studies,* edited by M. Darrol Bryant, also of Waterloo University. This series brought together primarily theologians who likewise explored Christian approaches to dialogue with the religious other which emphasized on an inclusive Christian approach (Bryant 1989). In 1990 Harold Coward contributed to the discourse with his edited text *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspective and Encounters*. Like the Bryant and Miller texts, *Hindu-Christian Dialogue,* emphasized a scholarly approach to the subject focused more on the dialogue of belief, with most drawing from sacred texts to establish theologies of pluralism in both traditions as bridges for further dialogue (Coward (ed) 1990). The emphasis on history, ritual practice, belief and sacred texts suggest that each of the above texts were written primarily for a scholarly audience.

In 1993, Bryant teamed with Doris Jakobsh to publish the 1993 *Canadian Interfaith Directory.* The 33-page directory was separated into three parts: organizations and groups; journals and media resources; scholars. The organizations section was mostly

focused on listing contact information for distinct religious communities who support interfaith efforts e.g., Anglican Church of Canada, Buddhist Council of Canada, Canadian Unitarian Council, etc., with just fifteen clearly identified as interfaith organizations.[22] The section devoted to scholars from universities across Canada testifies to the growth of religious studies departments across the country and the dedication of particular scholars to the interfaith endeavour of ensuring access to accurate information about world religions (Bryant and Jakobsh 1993).

In 1991, the Centre for Studies of Religion in Society (CSRS) was launched at the University of Victoria with Harold Coward filling the position of Director until 2002, Conrad Brunk from 2002-2008 and Paul Bramadat since July 2008. Since its beginning, the CSRS promotes "scholarly interdisciplinary research on topics at the intersection of religion and public life" (CSRS website). The CSRS has been host to visiting scholars, research associates and graduate students, who have contributed to well over two hundred publications of research findings on subjects that range from tradition specific studies of texts, to multidisciplinary research projects in which religion is recognized as a key consideration. Studies sponsored through the CSRS include examinations of environmental thought, concepts of justice, healthcare, palliative care, fisheries, animal biotechnology and more. As Coward explained, the research projects sponsored through the Centre "ensures that the knowledge of the religious traditions is included alongside

[22] The fifteen interfaith organizations listed in the directory include: Calgary Multi-Faith Development Education Project, Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation, Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, Pacific Interfaith Citizenship Association of British Columbia, Canadians for Interfaith Awareness and Harmony, Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Montreal, Christian-Jewish Dialogue of Toronto, Global Interfaith Network and Education Society, Interfaith Council of Montreal, Kitchener-Waterloo Interfaith Council, Multi-Faith Saskatoon, Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy, Sudbury Interfaith Council, World Conference on Religion and Peace Canada, World Interfaith Education Association (Bryant and Jakobsh 1993, 3-18)

the best that science, social science and the humanities has to offer when major global problems are addressed" (Coward 2006, 407). The interdisciplinary nature of research projects has also provided greater access to decision-makers in government, the private sector, NGOs and the general public as statements, policy papers, and articles or books produced by a collective of professional scholars from diverse disciplinary fields of study are more likely to receive greater attention than the work of individual scholars focusing on one field of study – even an interdisciplinary field such as religious studies. As part of its mandate, the CSRS has, since it opened in 1992, sponsored public talks, seminars and events that provide multiple opportunities for both the academic community and general public to explore religious responses to diverse issues (Interviews Victoria; CSRS website 2006, 2012).

The period between 1960s and 9/11 is also marked by the development of several interfaith advisory committees who provide input for the development of policies and programs designed to meet the constitutional right to freedom of religion of Canadians served by a number of government institutions including correctional services, healthcare, education, government administration and the military (discussed in more detail in Chapter Six). For example responding to the Swiss Air crash of 1998 near Halifax, the local government required assistance to develop and deliver a meaningful interfaith memorial service for families of the victims and looked to the Interfaith Council of Halifax for input and delivery, a process that has contributed to the development of clearer guidelines for preparing future official interfaith memorial services (Interviews Halifax).

5.1.3 Phase Three – Post 9/11

The attacks of September 11, 2001, mark a significant turning point for interfaith work around the world, greatly intensifying awareness about the importance of working toward better relations between religious communities (Brodeur 2005; King 2011; Pedersen 2004).

In Canada, several existing interfaith organizations rallied to the call for more information about negotiating religious diversity by introducing and refining outreach efforts beyond members of their own groups towards the larger religious community and more general public audience. For example, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews initiated the "Discover Diversity" school tours of religious sites in Toronto, an initiative that became the foundational activity for the organizational shift to the Canadian Centre for Diversity (Interviews Toronto). In 2006, the model was exported to interfaith groups in Calgary, Halifax, Vancouver and Winnipeg (Interviews Calgary, Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver).

Likewise, in Vancouver, for a few years after 9/11 members of the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society (VMAS), were invited by dozens of churches and synagogues to lead open dialogue sessions for approaching interfaith relations in a positive way (Interviews Vancouver). Such initiatives most often called upon the Muslim member of interfaith groups to lead the discussion as it was the need for more information about Islam and Muslim practitioners that seemed of most interest. As one Muslim from Montreal put it, during the immediate post 9/11 period, "there was an increased need for dialogue to overcome barriers in our lives" (Interview Montreal). However, by the time

the fieldwork interviews for this study were conducted in 2006 and 2007, participants acknowledged that requests were less frequent, approximately once or twice a year (ibid).

Scholars were also called upon to respond to media requests for more information about Islam and the "problems of religious diversity". Dr. Patrice Brodeur, Research Chair in Islam, Pluralism and Globalization at the Université de Montréal recalls fielding multiple requests from media in the months following 9/11 (Interview Montreal).

In the wake of 9/11, Dr. Arvind Sharma of McGill University has been a key organizer for two world congresses on religion after 9/11 held in Montreal. The first was in 2006 and the second in 2011. The first congress was a five-day event organized in cooperation with the World Parliament of Religion and brought together in Montreal over two thousand individuals from eighty-four countries who heard two hundred and twenty-five speakers, with eight workshops and eighteen plenary presentations, forty-seven panels and two hundred and thirty-six individual paper presentations (World Religions After 911 website 2007). While there was some media buzz around the event, in the days before the start there was a scramble to inform local religious studies students about reduced student registration fees to encourage more participation.

The second congress was scaled back to a one-day event with key partnership from the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (marking the new partnership with McGill), and high-profile speakers including His Holiness the Dali Lama and author Deepak Chopra. Attendance was also less than the first conference, limited mostly to invited speakers and students. A key action that came of the second conference was the adoption of three resolutions:

> 1. Resolved that a course in World's Religions should be taught wherever the confessional study of religion is carried out – in a seminary, or yeshiva, or madrasah, or Hindu Matha or Buddhist Monastery – provided that it has been approved by the apex body of that religion.
>
> 2. Resolved that violating the sanctity of the scripture of any religion, amounts to violating the sanctity of the scriptures of all religions.
>
> 3. Resolved that the religions of the world should come together to formulate a Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the World's Religions, which would embody their vision of human flourishing, and which would supplement the UN Declaration.
>
> (Second Global Conference on World Religions after 9/11)

The above statement follows the same pattern of several formal international organizations whose task focuses on preparing official statements to circulate amongst official religious and government institutions. However, the impact of this activity has yet to be seen.

Another key development within the Canadian interfaith movement since 9/11 has been the increased use of a network culture which employs the internet and increasingly social media to create more forums for interfaith dialogue, to promote activities and provide interfaith educational materials to a wider audience (Patel and Brodeur 2006). Most of the interfaith organizations mentioned thus far maintain websites with a range of online resources. For example, the Roman Catholic Scarboro Mission Interfaith page has one of the most comprehensive lists of interfaith dialogue resources including their world renowned "Golden Rule Across World Religions" poster initiative. The poster campaign was launched in 2000 as a resource for individuals, groups and religious communities interested in building interfaith relations. The poster includes 'golden rule' statements found in thirteen world religions. Since its launch the poster has been reproduced in eight

languages with a full slate of workshop and video resources to lead interfaith discussion activities with primary school children to adults (Scarboro Mission website 2006; Interview Toronto). Although the Scarboro Mission does host face-to-face educational programs, it is their 'golden rule' campaign that has received the most recognition. Presenting the complexities of world religions is such simplistic forms is certainly limiting, especially to long-time interfaith participants or religious scholars. However, the poster does provide an important educational tool for religious communities beginning interfaith work. The poster has also been a successful tool for interfaith initiatives geared toward children (Interview Toronto)

This phase has also been one in which several interfaith organizations extended their outreach efforts toward individuals who might be labelled "spiritual but not religious" (Interviews Vancouver, Montreal). This is particularly evident in interfaith organizations whose main focus is on shared religious practices. For example, the Interspiritual Centre of Vancouver or the Sacred Music Festival (Interviews Vancouver). Of note within these new groups are those individuals who have embraced these interfaith activities as their "religion of choice" (Interviews Vancouver). That is, while the default position of many engaged in interfaith activities is that dialogue "should not be seen as an effort to create a single overarching religion, but as an opportunity to celebrate the distinct nature of each religion while enriching my own" (Swidler 2008, 11), within the movement there appears to be a small but vocal constituency who has embraced interfaith as their religious identity. Alongside those from the "spiritual but not religious" camp, this phenomenon seems to be more commonly found within the younger demographic of the movement. At an interfaith youth conference in 2010, there were

several students overhead as declaring that “interfaith is my new religion” (Interviews Montreal). While an exception, following the advice of Morgan (1995), such expressions may suggest that the interfaith movement has provided opportunity for individuals to revise their religious identity. Whether it is a full switch, new hyphenated identity or a hybrid version needs to be explored further.

However, there have also been several interfaith organizations that evolved, went dormant or disbanded. For example, in 2003, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (CCCJ) experienced a significant evolution that ultimately resulted in the founding of the Canadian Centre for Diversity in 2005. In response to the shift in focus some long-time members cited that advancements in Jewish-Christian relations over the past 40 years allowed for a shift into the larger need for promoting understanding across religious and cultural traditions. Other members remarked the committee had stalled due to tension created by the critical statements directed towards Israeli policy in the Palestinian conflict taken by the United Church in their 2003 campaign “Paths to Peace in Israel and Palestine” (Interviews Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

In Halifax, after completing several rounds of religious sites visits and belief/practices luncheons the Halifax Interfaith Council decided to suspend activities in 2009 and reconvene only on an ad-hoc basis when a pressing need arises. The Montreal Interfaith Council has likewise experienced difficulties in attracting new members which has affected their programming, with the Canadian Ecumenical Centre (CEC) taking over organization and administration of the religious sites visits.

The CEC also experienced significant shifts during this period. Since 2004, interfaith activity took on an ever-increasing role in the organization. In 2010 they hosted two university students as 'Faith Act Fellows' sponsored by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation. The students acted as a liaison with local religious communities and assisted in building dialogue projects directed to youth including an interfaith chess tournament held at the 2011 World Congress on Religion after 9/11. In 2012 the CEC reaffirmed their commitment to an interfaith agenda by welcoming a Muslim and Jew onto the board of directors (CEC Newsletter 2012). However, in 2013 a further shift in the organization was noted within the May 2013 copy of their publication "Ecumenism Magazine" declaring the centre had decided to "reconnect with our vision, mission and core values. Our mission is to promote Christian unity and heal divisions" (Fines 2013, 4). This new position has greatly reduced the focus on interfaith activities.

The period also included several high-profile political issues centered on religious diversity in Canada. For example, in 2007 the decision by Elections Canada to allow Muslim women to wear a burka when voting was reported widely in the media with many calls for the permission to be revoked. When questions were asked of the process followed by Elections Canada, it became clear that officials had made the decision arbitrarily. That is, the office failed to consult Muslim communities to determine whether the position was required (CBC website 2007). In 2006 the Ontario provincial government struck down requests by a Muslim lobby group to include Sharia Law in the Arbitration Act, a decision that ultimately put an end to all faith-based arbitration (CBC website 2006). And in 2008, the Quebec provincial government announced the "Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural

Differences" in response to public discontent over reasonable accommodation (Consultation Commission website 2010). While each of the above issues are not specifically part of the Canadian interfaith movement, what is noteworthy in each of the above political issues, was the absence of statements issued by interfaith organizations. This is particularly striking in the case of the Quebec Commission as its mandate was to solicit responses from individuals and organizations across Quebec. The commission received hundreds of briefs including dozens from different religious communities (ibid). The silence speaks to the ongoing desire of many interfaith organizations in Canada to remain politically neutral.

Politically there has also been a greater effort to acknowledge religious diversity in large government sponsored celebrations or memorial services, although government sponsored interfaith councils remain limited. Businesses and education institutions are more accommodating of diverse religious practices. Churches, mosques, synagogues, and other sacred spaces participate in open-house activities to provide opportunities for learning more about the religions practiced in Canada. Even the Rotary International Convention held in Montreal 2010 hosted an interfaith service for its members (Interview Montreal). This suggests that within Canada the previously misunderstood concept of interfaith identified by Berthrong in 1985, has become more mainstream.

5.1.4. Observations on the History of Interfaith in Canada

This historical portrait of the Canadian interfaith movement mimics developments found in the global interfaith movement although on a smaller scale. Growth patterns

within the three planes of government, scholarship and grassroots follow similar trajectories, especially since post World War Two we can track Canadian interfaith activity dedicated to bridging religious diversity.

In the late 1940s the first groups dedicated to fostering positive Christian-Jewish relations were formed. Although not interfaith in the contemporary understanding of the term, the early ecumenical efforts of this period were truly working to bridge divides between what were seen to be distinct religious communities even though they shared affiliation to the Christian tradition. These initial efforts provided the foundations for future interfaith initiatives that began in the 1970s, often providing members who seeded subsequent grassroots groups and organizations. The 1990s saw a clear shift from a focus on ecumenical to one of interfaith for many organizations including chaplaincy services available to government services related to healthcare, corrections services, the military and on university campuses.

Canadian scholars have also contributed to this effort mostly through hosting formal dialogue sessions and publishing proceedings alongside other research that provides accurate information about religious communities and their practices.

Grassroots organizations are found in most large city centers, many having been established in the 1970s and mostly sharing a focus on education regarding religious diversity and community building. However, at the close of the first decade of the twenty-first century several have been struggling to maintain programs and attract new members. The exceptions seem to be found in those groups who are engaged in formal

dialogues (especially Christian-Muslim / Muslim-Jewish / Jewish-Christian), and those focused more on social justice work. This trend is also found in global portrait.

The movement remains small yet there exists a commitment to continue in the effort to foster respectful relations amongst religious communities as a positive model of religion within Canadian society.

5.2. Approaches and Structures of Canadian Interfaith Organizations

The types and organizational structures of interfaith activity identified in the Canadian interfaith movement echo those within the global interfaith work that was discussed in Chapter Three above.

5.2.1 Types of Interfaith Dialogue in Canada

> Dialogue groups are useful to get rid of stereotypes. (Interview Montreal)
>
> It is life issues, a dialogue of life, that brings us together. Issues like poverty, peace and justice. (Interview Toronto)
>
> In a Christian country it is a small number of people who do interfaith and social justice work. (Interview Toronto)

Interfaith activities by definition require the coming together of two or more faith communities in dialogue. In Canada, interfaith dialogue can be either bi-lateral (between two faith traditions), tri-lateral (three faith traditions), or multi-lateral (three or more faith traditions). Each of the nine types of dialogue discussed in Chapter Three (page 145-

146), are also present in Canada although the key focus of most organizations tends to be directed toward:

1. *Dialogue of Education* – religious sites visits, panel discussions where hosts from a specific tradition shares details of doctrine and practice with the audience then fields questions.
2. *Dialogue of Life* – social justice activities most often directed to aiding the impoverished (e.g. soup kitchens, homeless shelters, Habitat for Humanity).
3. *Dialogue of Governments* - efforts by federal to local government services to ensure the rights to freedom of religion are upheld wherever possible.

Each is discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

5.2.2. Organizational Structures of Canadian Interfaith Organizations

Interfaith organizations may solicit members by invitation only or through open calls to the public at large, but the structure of each interfaith initiative often depends on the aims of the interfaith groups, group objectives and the resources available.

5.2.2.1. Representative Model

This model requires that all members of the organization be appointed as representatives of their respective faith communities. Examples include Vancouver-based Pacific Interfaith Citizens Association (PICA) and the Canadian Council of Christian and Jews (CCCJ). Some organizations mark the benefit of this approach as integral to the credibility of the group, particularly when they issue public statements or are asked to

perform consultation work with government advisory boards (Interviews Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver). However, it is often difficult to find official "representatives" outside of mainline Christian expressions; the authority structures of most religions are polycentric rather than centralized. As a result interfaith organizations in Canada using this model tend to rely on the local religious "associations" formed primarily to manage places of worship to appoint members to interfaith committees. For example, the Corrections Services Canada Interfaith Chaplaincy Committee includes representatives from distinct religious communities to ensure equitable representation (See Figure 3).

Figure 3
Corrections Services Canada Interfaith Chaplaincy Committee List of Member Organizations in the Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy

Active member organizations for 2005-2006
The Anglican Church of Canada
Buddhist Society
Canadian Baptist Ministries
The Canadian Council of Churches
The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
The Christian and Missionary Alliance
The Church of the Nazarene, Canada
The Council of the Muslim Community of Canada, Ottawa-Carleton Muslim Association
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
The Jain Society
The Lutheran Council, Canada
The Mennonite Central Committee, Canada
The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
The Religious Society of Friends
The Salvation Army
The United Church of Canada

Active in the past (no delegated representative for 2005-2006)
The Apostolic Church of Pentecost
The Canadian Jewish Congress
The Christian Reformed Church, Canada
The Federation of Sikh Societies of Canada
The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists
The Islamic Coordinating Council of Imams
The Seventh Day Adventist Church
The Wesleyan Church

Source: Corrections Canada Website –Accessed March 5, 2010.

Advocates of the representative model appreciate that they can expect both a set number of participants and an equitable representation around the table. The Canadian Christian-Muslim Dialogue Group for example employs a formal representative model to ensure there are an equal number of Muslim and Christian participants around the table.

Equity and representation are not always certain. A common challenge identified within several multifaith organizations working within this format has been to balance the desire for inclusion with the potential over-representation of Christians from various denominations at table (Interviews Montreal, Toronto).[23] While equity is the ideal, given that 70% of the Canadian population maintain an affiliation with Christianity and that fewer than 10% claim non-Christian affiliation, equitable representation may remain a challenge for some time.

A few interfaith organizations who follow a representative model have also adopted the "150-year" rule which limits participation to religious communities that have at minimum a history of 150-years, particularly in groups where the dialogue of belief is a clear focus. Some justify this rule as required to ensure the dialogue table includes only religious communities with a rich history and solid foundation of religious doctrine, practice and identity. Others see the rule as one that allows participants of the Baha'i faith but not of the Mormon tradition or other new religious movement including Scientology or members of the Unification Church (Interviews Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal). In many representative model organizations there is little room for those who claim a "spiritual but not religious" identity. Likewise self-declared agnostics or atheists are not represented.

[23] Unitarians participating on representative councils have been caught in debates about over-representation with some holding Unitarianism as an independent religious tradition and others arguing it is yet another Christian denomination.

5.2.2.2. Independent Model

Organizations working with an independent model see their members as individuals of diverse faith communities who come together with the common aim of promoting interfaith relations. This model allows for a more transient membership that may include inequitable representation of faith traditions. Supporters claim this structure is more open to individuals from all faith traditions as it is not necessary to gain approval from their community to participate. Others see the independent nature of this model as the best way to ensure freedom of expression especially when discussing more controversial differences between faith traditions. However, without the mandate to represent others there tends to be a higher turnover of members. One long-time participant noted that most people attend interfaith events for about eighteen months (Interview Toronto). Examples of the independent organizational model in Canada include the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society and the Interfaith Council of Halifax.

5.2.2.3. Formal or Informal Organizations

Whether representative or independent, organizations may be formal or informal. Formal organizations may opt to:

1. create an official mission statement or outline a specific set of goals and objectives of the group;
2. manage a consistent program of educational interfaith activities or dedicate efforts to promote one-time events;
3. maintain an official membership with or without fees;
4. incorporate and engage in official fundraising activities which also requires election of a board of directors.

An apt example is found in the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action (EIC). In an effort to realize their dream of establishing and interfaith centre, in 1995 the EIC formalized their activities by establishing a representative board of directors, submitting an application for incorporation and adopting a paid membership fee. The corporate status of the organization allowed them to rent and insure facilities for the centre and apply for funding from various government and non-government programs to assist in realizing their goals of providing an educational space accessible to the wider community (Interviews Edmonton).

Informal organizations may also engage in any of the above actions (except incorporation), but more often tend to work organically or in an ad-hoc fashion responding to the changing interests of a core group, organizing activities as required, often single events that do not require membership in the group to participate. For example, one independent Vancouver interfaith initiative brought together individuals from Jewish, Anglican, Baptist, and Buddhist communities, along with members of the local First Nations reserve for a spring salmon blessing service (Interviews Vancouver). The event was deemed a success by most participants except the Baptist preacher. He had been invited by the Anglican member but had misunderstood that the event would be a shared worship service. After the event he explained that due to his religious beliefs he could not participate in future events (ibid).

5.3. Resources for Interfaith

With the exception of a few government sponsored programs, interfaith activities in Canada are organized by volunteers with funds raised almost exclusively through donations from members. Initiatives affiliated with larger religious institutions may benefit from financial and administrative support. For example, the Canadian Christian Muslim Liaison Committee is sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches Interfaith Relations Committee who provides the meeting space, refreshments for participants and administrative support for coordinating the annual meeting. Most Christian members are also paid staff members of their respective denominations. However, Muslim members are all volunteers who work full-time outside their religious communities. This situation requires that dialogue sessions be scheduled in the evenings or on weekends. The time demands and the increasing traffic and travel difficulties in Toronto have made it difficult to attract new Muslim dialogue partners to the table (Interviews Toronto).

Likewise, the Montreal Interfaith Council, alongside other bi-lateral dialogue groups in the city, depends on the Canadian Ecumenical Centre to provide space for meetings and basic administrative support for producing and distributing promotional materials (Interviews Montreal).

Although members from most grassroots interfaith organizations expressed the desire to hire part-time staff to assist with planning events and communication, there are only a few grassroots interfaith organizations that support paid staff members (albeit often on a sporadic basis due to unstable funding sources), including the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society (part-time coordinator and contract staff for specific projects),

Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action (one part-time coordinator), and Ontario Multifaith Council (coordinator and staff librarian) (Interviews Halifax, Edmonton, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

The ability for religious communities to mobilize resources – material and volunteer, and community-building capacity for the benefit of social movements, has been documented in several studies (Gardner 2002; Kniss and Burns 2004; Williams 2003). The relatively new status of interfaith work is dependent upon and grounded in the support from religious communities of participants. Many individuals within distinct religious communities recognize that interfaith cooperation is not only part of living in a religiously diverse community but can raise the profile of religious people as contributing positively to society. Yet, interfaith work is but one more activity drawing upon the already limited resources managed by most religious communities. More creative thinking is required to solve the resource issue. In several nations, governments have recognized that fostering good interfaith relations is an important social good worth investing in. As will be discussed in the next chapter, Canadian government responses to support interfaith work have been mixed.

CHAPTER SIX: INTERFAITH INITIATIVES: GOVERNMENT, SCHOLARSHIP AND GRASSROOTS

Publicly accessible interfaith initiatives in Canada are most often found within three domains: government services, scholarship and grassroots organizations. Each shares the interfaith objective of fostering positive relations amongst religious people in Canada, and each engages in interfaith work to meet distinct goals, approaches, organizational structures, memberships, successes and challenges.

6.1. Interfaith Initiatives within Government Sectors

There is an emerging scholarship in Canada which is questioning whether religion as a whole is being and has largely been ignored within official government policies and practices (Bramadat 2005, 2009; Seljak 2009; Biles and Humeria 2005; Milot 2009). Although there is room for improvement, there are notable interfaith policies and programs that have been developed and implemented by various institutions representing all levels of government in Canada including corrections services, the military, healthcare, education and quasi-government sponsored councils. With varying success, in many respects, it is these institutions that best demonstrate how Canadian society has formally recognized the need for tools to negotiate religious diversity as a social fact within Canadian culture.

6.1.1 Corrections Services

> The Friendship Centre has close relations with healthcare and corrections. Elders can take their medicine bags on their visits and perform healing circles.
> (Interview Halifax)

> Our efforts hinge on the Memorandum of Agreement with the provincial government to maintain an arm's length advisory position that ensures the adequate and appropriate spiritual care for residents in government funded institutions including corrections, health care and group homes.
> (Interview Toronto)

One of the most successful government-sponsored efforts to respond to religious pluralism is found in the policies and programs adopted by corrections services with their effort to accommodate the religious needs of incarcerated Canadians. Corrections Services from the federal, provincial and municipal levels include training programs for staff aimed at raising awareness of the various means in which the system accommodates the diverse religious needs of the population found within the prison system. Since 1982, Corrections Services Canada (CSC) has had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy (ICC) (Correction Services Canada website 2009). The ICC is a formal representation-type organization with individual representatives from seventeen religious communities across Canada sitting on its committee. Most representatives participate on behalf of various Christian denominations. The exception are representatives from Jain, Buddhist and Muslim community associations (see Figure 3 above).

With the adoption of the MOU, correctional chaplaincy programs have adopted an interfaith approach to chaplaincy services which includes "Religious and Spiritual Accommodation" guidelines for staff, offenders and their families. It ensures chaplains

have the resources to provide offenders with access to religious leaders when required and that the system provides the means for all to perform their religious duties (Correction Services Canada website 2009).

Since 2003, the CSC Chaplaincy has been engaged in the Chaplaincy Impact Project which has reviewed a range of services offered and produced three reports including the Pastoral Care Report (2004), the Community Engagement Report (2006), and the Religious and Spiritual Services Report (2007). Each report highlights the changing religious demographic within the corrections system. The 2007 reports includes the following 2005 figures of religious representation claimed among the prison population:

All Religion	21,702
Catholic	9,194
Protestant	4,519
Muslim	761
Jewish	159
Native Spiritual	753
Buddhist	387
Sikh	102

In addition to these main categories, 1,437 offenders are classified as 'Other', and 4,286 as 'No Religion'.

CSC 2007, 1

The 2007 report also highlighted the ongoing need to continue to assess and develop resources and services to meet the changing need to accommodate more religious diversity within the population. This includes hiring chaplains from non-Christian traditions when there is a significant population requiring the religious/spiritual services (CSC 2007).

Such was the case in September 2012 when the CSC of British Columbia posted an employment offer seeking a Wiccan chaplain to provide seventeen hours of support monthly. As the National Post reported on the issue, the number of hours was one less than what was asked of the Jewish chaplain (National Post 2012). The following day Public Safety Minister Vic Toews suspended the tender commenting that "the government isn't convinced that paying the salary of a witchcraft practitioner is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars", despite the recognition by Corrections Services Canada that the position was posted in response to a recognized need (CBC.ca 2012a). Response to the move was criticized by several organizations including the B.C. Civil Liberties Association whose representative David Eby pointed to the constitutional obligation for Corrections Services Canada to provide a spiritual leader. As he explained:

> "It's the kind of job posting that is going to catch a lot of people off guard, but the government does have an obligation not to discriminate between religions," he said.
>
> "They [Canadian Government] don't get to say, 'We like the Catholics but we don't like the Wiccans,' or 'We like people who practise the Muslim faith but we don't like the Wiccans.' They have to provide those services equally."
>
> CBC Website 2012a

Despite criticisms, the position was not re-posted and there is no official statement available from the Federal Public Safety office in charge of Correction Services Canada. Instead, in October 2012, the Federal government decided to eliminate part-time chaplaincy positions effectively leaving Muslim, Jewish, Sikh and other non-Christian prisoners without access to religious counselling services (CBC Website, 2012b). Perhaps in response to a legal suit launched by a prisoners' rights group in British

Columbia, in April 2013, the federal government restored funding for the pre-existing forty-nine part-time chaplain positions (CBC website 2013a, 2013b).

6.1.2. Canadian Military

> Through the military chaplaincy, we want to create the conditions for people to feel their culture will be respected. (Interview Halifax)

The Canadian Military has had a chaplaincy program since its inception. In 1997, the program shifted from its traditional Christian base to an interfaith approach with the institution of the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy (Bourque 2006). The move to an interfaith approach reflected not only the increasing religious diversity of the Canadian population, and the desire and potential to recruit from this growing pool of citizens, but also to be better prepared to respond to diverse religious situations associated with the increasing calls for Canada to participate in military exercises outside the country. Since then, efforts have been made to provide non-Christian members of the military (primarily First Nations), with access to multifaith chapels that can be transformed to accommodate the performance of diverse religious worship activities. For example, in 2006 the Canadian Forces Base Halifax celebrated the official opening and dedication of a Multifaith Hall to accommodate the religious service needs for all military personal (Interview Halifax). The hall has a moveable wall that divides the space. On one side there is a moveable altar and chairs creating a space that is used primarily for Christian worship services. On the other side the space has been left open with a compass design incorporated into the floor tiles for use by First Nations, Muslim and

Wiccan traditions. There are closets on one side of the space to store diverse religious icons and extra tables and chairs. For larger events the moveable wall can be stored to provide a large open space (ibid).

Despite the efforts to be more accommodating to diverse religious practices, so far recruitment of non-Christians has been limited mostly to the reserve forces. Even recruitment to the chaplaincy program has been limited with only two non-Christian chaplains in the military. A Muslim cleric (inducted in 2003) has been deployed to Afghanistan not only to provide chaplaincy services but also to assist in cross-cultural communication needs of the mission. In February 2007, an Orthodox Rabbi was also inducted into Chaplaincy Services (National Defence and Canadian Forces website).[24]

6.1.3. Healthcare Services

> The medical world is shifting to recognize care of the spirit as part of caring for the whole. … The spiritual and religious care unit has been in place for less than ten years. It is interfaith and not always religions. We encounter patients in spiritual distress that need support outside of traditional models. … Chaplains are well accepted. The chaplain is an integrated member of the health support team and regularly works with patients and staff. (Interview Halifax)

The healthcare system has been slower in adapting their services to accommodate religious diversity with the key response being the responsibility of chaplaincy programs in hospitals. In the hospital setting it is the chaplain who acts as the liaison between the

[24] For more information about interfaith relations in the Canadian military and correctional services see the 2009 article by Joanne Benham Rennick published in *Horizons* (March 2009); and the 2006 article by Ron P. Bourque, "Religious Pluralism and the Current and Future Structure of the Canadian Forces Chaplaincy", in *Chaplains in War and Peace: Ethical Dilemmas of Conscience and Conflicting Professional Roles in Military Chaplaincy in Canada.* (81-110).

patient and medical staff when religious questions or needs are raised. Most hospital chaplaincy programs across the country have evolved from their Christian foundations to become religious and spiritual care programs. Increasingly, hospital chaplains have shifted from members of the local clergy (Christian or non-Christian), to a professional position that requires completion of an extensive training program offered by the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE). Individuals interested in pursuing a career in hospital chaplaincy must both complete a Master's degree in Theology, and also must secure sponsorship by their religious community. This minimum requirement allows entry into the program which requires a minimum of 400 hours of practical training and theoretical course work including a basic overview of diverse religious traditions (CAPPE Website 2010). The demand for formal education training in one's religious tradition can limit the potential for candidates from non-Christian traditions as such training is not readily accessible to many non-Christians living in Canada. However, for non-Christian traditions, CAPPE does recognize Master's degrees from religious studies programs as meeting the education requirement.

6.1.4. Education

The education system has had mixed results in promoting positive interfaith relations. At the elementary and secondary levels, attempts to counter the growing religious illiteracy in Canada have been limited (see Seljak 2005; Sweet 1997). However, there have been some signs of change.

6.1.4.1. Public Education – Elementary and Secondary Levels

> Teach the children. Inculcate non-violence as an operating principle in life. (Interview Halifax)

> Students have a profound attachment to religious diversity. They are feeding themselves with diversity. (Interview Montreal)

The Ontario Catholic School board has incorporated a mandatory course on world religions into the grade eleven curriculum (Bertrone 2006). In Toronto, several confessional high schools (Catholic, Jewish, Muslim), and public education high schools, have taken advantage of a program developed by the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews (since 2005 the Canadian Centre for Diversity). The "Discovering Diversity School Program" takes classes on a one-day bus tour to three houses of worship where clergy from each faith introduce the students to the religious traditions and provide the opportunity for questions and conversation about religious diversity. This program has been in operation since 2002 and boasts a full schedule of at least one group tour every school day of the 2009/2010 academic year (Canadian Centre for Diversity website; Interview Toronto). Since 2006 the program has expanded to include tours and diversity leadership training in Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver and Halifax (ibid). However, the most successful program is in Toronto.

Quebec has created one of the more comprehensive religious education programs in Canada. As of September 2008 a new program entitled "Ethics and Religious Culture" (ERC) became mandatory for all Quebec primary and secondary schools (except for

grade nine)[25] (Quebec Ministry of Education Ethics and Religious Culture Guide 2008). The program represents a radical departure from the previous Moral and Religious Education programs included directed instruction in Catholic, Protestant or Moral education. In the new program students are expected to build competencies in three areas:

1. reflect on ethical questions;
2. demonstrate an understanding of the phenomenon of religion;
3. engage in dialogue.

These competencies are envisioned as both distinct and interrelated. The dialogue competency is considered the cornerstone of the program with the directive that dialogue is an activity that is 'good for thinking' and is also a *moral good* in that it potentially enhances our capacity to 'live well together' (ibid, 8 (emphasis author)). Unfortunately, implementation of the program has encountered serious road bumps with minimal resources or training for teachers. The lack of training was most notable in the court case raised by the family of a young Catholic boy from Drummondville who told his parents that he wanted his family to become Hindu because then they could have seven lives and that would save his dying grandfather (Fiedelman, 2009).

Not all schools are accepting of this new curriculum guideline. Loyola High School, a private Jesuit school in Montreal has, since the introduction of the program, been seeking an exemption on the premise that the program restricts the school from providing their students with a Catholic education (CBC 2103c). When the minister of education refused the exemption request, the school opted to take the issue to the superior

[25] Within the literature produced by the Quebec Ministry of Education, it was not apparent why grade nine students were excluded from the program.

Court of Quebec which sided with the school. However, in December 2012 the Quebec Court of Appeal reversed the ruling. In June 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed to hear the case (CBC 2013c).

6.1.4.2. Post-Secondary

> Within university settings we need administrative support to provide the space and resources for students to meet one another in formal to informal activities. (Interview Toronto)

> First year introduction to religion courses are always full. (Interview Halifax)

Success at the post-secondary level has also been mixed. There are vibrant religious studies departments in many Canadian universities that offer courses covering the spectrum of religious expressions. However, within the academy there are scholars from other fields of research who continue to question why modern universities should have departments of religious studies any more than they would have departments of astrology. This sometimes hostile view of religious studies may account for the limited number of courses outside religious studies that examine the impact of religion or religious diversity in society.

Outside the classroom and religious studies departments, the most visible and vocal promotion of religious diversity on campus is often sponsored by the Chaplaincy Programs. Many campus chaplaincy programs have, like corrections services, the military and healthcare, adopted a multifaith formula over the past fifteen years. This format encourages connections with local religious communities to provide the

increasingly diverse student population with access to chaplains from their own religious faith tradition. Multifaith chaplaincies offer a range of informal interfaith education programs including interfaith fairs, meditations across traditions workshops, brown bag exchanges (informal lunchtime interfaith discussions), panel discussions, etc. Many also organize and host interfaith worship services to mark university events including convocation or memorial services when tragedy strikes the campus (e.g., the death of a teacher, staff or student or to mark larger public tragedies such as the events of 9/11, the shooting at Dawson College (Montreal), or to honour victims of the 2012 earthquake in Haiti) (Chaplaincy Questionnaire 2006). As one chaplain declared, "but university chaplains are living the multifaith thing every day. It can be challenging, hard work but satisfying work" (Interview Montreal).

6.1.5. Government Sponsored Interfaith Councils

> One problem of interfaith in Toronto is that the programming and people come and go. Volunteer projects are vulnerable. Always looking for volunteers and resources gets tiring. (Interview Toronto)

Although the above government sponsored initiatives suggest advancement in government efforts to promote interfaith awareness, Canada lags far behind Britain and Australia particularly in the area of government-sponsored interfaith councils (Seljak 2009; Crabtree 2003).

A 2003 survey of interfaith activity in the UK commissioned by the Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom identified nearly 140 active multilateral local interfaith

groups, councils and associations, a substantial growth from the dozen or so initiatives active in the 1980s (Crabtree 2003). On reflection, Crabtree suggested that introduction of the Local Government Act in 1999, the Crime and Disorder Act in 1998 and the Local Strategic Partnership requirement of 2000, encouraged local governments to seek out and cooperate with local authority figures, including religious authorities, to ensure adequate representation of all "service users" in preparing community development plans (ibid, 140-141).

In Australia there is a similar experience with the 1998 introduction of the government supported "Living in Harmony" policy and funding program which resulted in an explosion of interfaith activity across the country. Beginning with the creation of the Australian Intercultural Society (AIS) in 2000, intercultural societies have sprung up in most large urban centers with the key mandate of promoting "interreligious and cross-cultural relations, harmony and social inclusion in the diverse multi-faith, multicultural communities in Australia, acting as a catalyst for social and policy change" (Australian Intercultural Society website 2010). Alongside these formal interfaith councils the "Living in Harmony" program has, since 2003, fostered the development of almost 390 community interfaith projects with a $1.5 million annual budget granting program (Living in Harmony Australia website, 2010). In 2010, the 'Living in Harmony" program was transformed into the "Diversity and Social Cohesion Program" (Australian Immigration Department website 2013).

Such international efforts far out-strip the record in Canada, which currently provides limited policy endorsement or financial support. There are only two official interfaith councils across the country – (1) Ontario Multifaith Council and (2) Manitoba

Interfaith Immigration Council Inc. The Ontario Multifaith Council (OMC) was founded in March 1972 as a partnership between the Ontario government and a number of faith groups to ensure "spiritual and religious care would be consistently available to those in government-funded and –operated institutions", a relationship that was affirmed in a Memorandum of Agreement signed in 1992 (Ontario Multifaith Council website, 2007). This formal representative body relies on volunteer representatives from an ever-expanding number of religious communities active in Ontario (thirty-three in 2007 - see Figure 4). The OMC operates a library, trains multi-faith chaplains for corrections services and hospitals in Ontario, prepares material and promotes the annual province-wide "Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week" (October), and acts as a resource centre.

Figure 4
Ontario Multifaith Council SRC Membership - January 2007

Ontario Multifaith Council SRC Membership - January 2007

- Anglican Church of Canada
- Baha'i Community
- Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec
- Canadian Conference Brethren in Christ Church
- Canadian Unitarian Council
- Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Christian Reformed Church
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada – Eastern Synod
- Fellowship of Christian Assemblies
- Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada
- The Free Methodist Church in Canada
- Hindu Federation
- Islamic Council of Imams of Canada
- Jain Society
- Jewish Community
- Macedonian Orthodox Church
- Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada Ontario
- Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches
- Ontario Conference of the United Church of Canada
- Ontario Congregations of the Church of Christ, Scientist (Christian Science)
- Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada
- Reformed Church in America
- The Salvation Army
- Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada
- Sikh Community
- Tibet Buddhist Community
- Toronto and Region Islamic Congregation (TARIC)
- Wiccan Church of Canada
- Zoroastrian Society of Ontario

Active in the past

- Canadian Council Of Hindus
- Presbyterian Church in Canada
- Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops

Source: Ontario Multifaith Council website. Accessed May, 31, 2007.

In recent years the Ontario Multifaith Council office has fielded more than 20,000 questions about religious practices and accommodation needs raised by government departments, grassroots interfaith organizations, religious communities and the general public. However, funding cuts by the Ontario government in 2007 eliminated over half of the operating budget overnight, a move that has greatly reduced size of the Centre, the number of its staff and its capacity to continue its education and training programs (Interview Toronto).

The Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Incorporated grew from a small organization of churches that came together in the post WWII period to support immigrants in their efforts to resettle in Canada. The representative organization relied mainly on volunteers and modest fundraising of donations by congregations to support their efforts until well into the1990s (Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council website, March 2010). In 2000, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed with the Federal government to support refugee sponsor programs in Manitoba (ibid).

More recently there are signs that federal and provincial governments are responding to the need for more resources to support interfaith initiatives. In 2011 British Columbia launched the Interfaith Bridging Project which offers project funding that draws upon the positive influence "faith communities can play in building diverse, inclusive communities and in eliminating racism and promoting multiculturalism" (British Columbia Interfaith Bridging Project Website 2012).

6.2. Scholarship, Research Institutes and Research Chairs

> Scholars best help by not being apologetic or critical, but instead fill the role of resource person or mediator. As a resource more than leader.
>
> (Interview Montreal)

> A number of faculty members were opposed to having research with religion on campus. The CSRS introduced the study of religion at the research level and proved its academic merit becoming a star research centre. (Interview Victoria)

As the selection of texts discussed thus far suggest, since the mid-1990s there has been more academic interest in studying the role of religion and religious diversity in society. In Canada several research institutes have been established with a focus on studying the impact of religion in a range of social research. While not exclusively focused on interfaith, the public activities and publications produced through these institutes raise the profile of religion as a vibrant contribution to contemporary culture and contribute important educational resources about religious diversity in Canada.

Most notable is the already mentioned University of Victoria Centre for Studies in Religion and Society which has been active for 15 years since 1994. Since 2001 there has been a steady increase in research institutes whose mandate also includes religion as a focus such as the Centre d'étude des religions de l'Université de Montréal (CÉRUM) in operation since 2001, the Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life at the University of Alberta opened in the spring of 2006, the Simon Fraser University Interfaith Summer Institute launched in the summer of 2007 (last session in 2010), the McGill Centre for Research on Religion initiated in the fall 2007, and the Vancouver School of Theology's Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre for Social Action, Research and Contemplative Practice launched in 2009. There have also been several

Canadian Research Chairs established with religion as a key theme of research including Dr. Patrice Brodeur, Université de Montréal - Canada Research Chair on Islam, Pluralism and Globalization; Dr. Lori Beaman, University of Ottawa - Canada Research Chair in the Contextualization of Religion in a Diverse Canada; Dr. Jens Zimmerman, Trinity Western University - Canada Research Chair in Interpretation, Religion and Culture.

McGill University is the first Canadian university to forge a partnership with international interfaith institutes. From 1997 to 2006, McGill hosted summer interfaith seminars in partnership with the Elijah Interfaith Institute. The six-week seminars invited students and scholars from diverse religious traditions to share in deep dialogue on a range of subjects including: holy lives; sacred space; sexuality, textuality and spirituality; hair; and hagiography (Interviews Montreal; Elijah Interfaith Institute 2010). Since 2010, McGill has partnered with the Tony Blair Faith Foundation on the World Religions after 9/11 project and as a lead university in the "Faith and Globalization" initiative (Tony Blair Faith Foundation 2013). In May 2013 the McGill Faculty of Religion established the Barbara and Patrick Keenan Chair in Interfaith Studies (McGill Invitation May 2013).

6.3. Grassroots Interfaith Activities in Canada

> Dialogue allows us to begin to see each other and our common values. (Interview Halifax)

> As the Canadian community becomes more of a mosaic we need to learn more about each other. Interfaith is a new frontier. (Interview Toronto)

> Interfaith is no longer an option. More churches are wanting to engage because we live in a pluralistic context. (Interview Toronto)

> Multifaith is an alternative to traditional religion. A missionary activity but not a move to a super religion. (Interview Vancouver)

> Interfaith is becoming mainstream. Post 9/11 a lot of people have made more effort to know each other. (Interview Montreal)

> In Canada interfaith work has the gift of stability and mutual respect. Canada values culture and sees pluralism as a strength. One of God's great experiments. (Interview Vancouver)

In Canada, grassroots interfaith activities can be found across the country. From one-of themed events like a sacred music festival or salmon blessing, to ongoing programming by an established group, in the large city centers there are interfaith activities which occur each week. The fieldwork interviews and participant observations provided rich data about interfaith work in Canada, particularly about initiatives functioning at the grassroots level. Most grassroots interfaith groups are located in major Canadian cities, however this study focused on initiatives found within the cities of Calgary (4), Edmonton (1), Halifax (2), Montreal (9), Toronto (10), Vancouver (11), and

Victoria (4).[26] The study identifies many common characteristics found within forty-two publicly known grassroots interfaith groups or organizations in Canada.

Religious representation within Canadian grassroots organizations is quite diverse. As would be expected, Christians are the dominant member tradition with participants in all but three dialogue groups – one Buddhist/Hindu group and two Muslim/Jewish groups (see Table 10). Jews and Muslims also appear frequently on the lists of faith communities involved. Jews tend to be members of Reform or Conservative traditions and are most often appointed by the regional chapters of the Canadian Jewish Congress. Muslim participants most often identify as Sunni. Of the forty-two groups surveyed, eighteen included Buddhists, Sikhs in fifteen, seventeen with Unitarians, Baha'i in eleven, and Zoroastrians in four. The representation rates of these last three traditions is of note given the overall population of each community is quite small in Canada (Statistics Canada for 2001: Unitarians = 17,480; Baha'i = 18,020; Zoroastrians = 4,955), suggesting either a doctrinal motivation to engage or perhaps a need to find recognition within the larger religious population. First Nations representatives were identified in just four groups, with participation being described as sporadic. Likewise, those who identify as "Spiritual" were included in four. There was just one interfaith group reporting representation that fits within the no religion category, that is the Interfaith Council of Toronto with over 70 members including four organizations identified as multifaith and someone who declared no religious identity. The limited

[26] There are well-known interfaith organizations in several Canadian cities including Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, London, and Guelph, among others. However, due to limited resources they were not included in the data collection pool of this study.

representation of these last four religious identities suggests that interfaith work in Canada has a clear focus on building relations with traditional religious communities.

Table 10
Representation of Religious Traditions in Study Sample of Forty-Two Grassroots Interfaith Organizations in Canada

Tradition	Denomination	Representation by Denomination	Representation by Tradition
Christians			**39**
	Roman Catholic	27	
	Anglican	30	
	Presbyterian	11	
	United Church	32	
	Baptist	7	
	Evangelical	5	
	Mormon	4	
	Lutheran	7	
	Eastern Orthodox	3	
Jewish			**22**
	Reform	12	
	Conservative	14	
	Orthodox	6	
Muslim			**28**
	Sunni	30	
	Shiite	4	
	Ismaili	3	
	Suffi	5	
Buddhist			**18**
	Born into Tradition	13	
	Convert	8	
Hindu			**17**
Sikh			**15**
Bah'ai			**11**
Zoroastrian*			**4**
First Nations*			**4**
Jain			**1**
Spiritual			**4**
Multireligious Organizations			**1**
No Religion			**1**

Source: Details from survey questions about grassroots organizations active in Canada.
* Representation in organizations is sporadic and dependant on the availability of participants.

Most interfaith grassroots organizations follow an independent informal voluntary organizational structure with membership rosters filled by religious leaders and lay practitioners who self-identify with a particular faith but do not act as official representatives for the community. The exception is most often found in formal dialogue groups where invited or appointed representation is more often the norm.

Many long-standing Christian members of grassroots interfaith organizations have also been involved with Canadian chapter groups of international ecumenical organizations like Kairos or World Council of Churches. Members who participated in these organizations were often key players in the WCRP, WIFEA and URI groups. Likewise, many long-standing non-Christian members began their interfaith work through Canadian city chapters of international organizations focused on peace and education about religious diversity including the International Association for Religious Freedom, WCRP, WIFEA and URI groups. A few even held executive positions at the national and international level.

The national network for several of these international chapter groups has provided opportunities for many participants to develop relationships with their counterparts across the country. As such, despite geographical distances, within the Canadian interfaith community there are a significant number of participants who are well-known to one another.

With few exceptions, most grassroots interfaith initiatives tend to attract individuals who have been active participants in religious communities with moderate to liberal ideologies (e.g., mainstream Christians from the United Church, Anglican,

Presbyterian and Roman Catholic communities; Unitarians; Conservative to Reform Jews; Ismaili, some Sufi Muslims and South Asian Sunni Muslims; Buddhist converts; Baha'i; Zoroastrians). While some initiatives include participation by individuals from more conservative religious expressions (e.g. Christian evangelists, Pentecostals, Mormons, Eastern Christians, and conservative expressions of non-Christian traditions), it is more the exception than the rule. Although Unitarians and Bah'ai have quite small numbers within the religious landscape, their doctrine of unity has inspired many participants to become involved with interfaith work.

Most multi-lateral dialogue groups include individual participants from the Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Buddhist traditions. Several interviewees mentioned that their participation was motivated by a desire for recognition and respect as an individual with a minority status not always limited to religious identity, but often in tandem with the status of immigrant or visible minority. This opinion was most often expressed by participants who have been long-standing members of grassroots groups that started in the 1970s. On reflection, several of the same participants acknowledged that much has changed since their first interfaith encounters. Social attitudes about the other has shifted toward more acceptance and understanding, "religious diversity has become more mainstream" (Interview Vancouver).

Of the groups with Buddhist representation, almost half of the participants were North American converts to Buddhism who have rejected either Christian or Jewish roots.

Involvement by First Nations people is inconsistent or absent in most grassroots initiatives across the country. Several participants explain that the absence of First Nations participants is in part due to the fact that most First Nations people are affiliated with either a Roman Catholic or Protestant Christian tradition. Others suggest the community is more focused on internal political issues. The exception is found in the separate official dialogues between First Nations people and each of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and United Churches related to the residential schools experience.

Involvement by ethnic Christians is rare to non-existent. For example, interviewees were unable to identify participants from Ukrainian, Greek, or Russian Orthodox, Coptic, Korean Presbyterians, Italian Catholics, Philippine Catholics, African or South/Central American Christians.

Acceptance of Pagans, new religious movements and "spiritual but not religious" is limited. Most often individuals who identify with these traditions are found in groups with a social justice or shared workshop focus (VMAS, Vancouver Sacred Music, University chaplaincy programs), or when official representation was required for government-sponsored programs (Corrections Services, Ontario Multifaith Council).

Most interfaith groups avoid political action, with only a few willing to make public statements. In particular, discussion about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict was identified by several as a taboo subject, especially within bi-lateral dialogue groups involving Jewish participants.

With the exception of Halifax, in each urban centre within this study, there are interfaith groups that have been operating for more than thirty years with several

founding members still involved. Thus the development of long-standing interfaith friendships is a common trait.

The aims of most Canadian interfaith activities tend to fall primarily into three categories: bridge building, education, and social justice work. While some grassroots interfaith organizations also engage in political activities, this is more the exception than the rule.

6.3.1 Bridge Building

> Interfaith is the attempt to provoke conversation, to learn how to get on with God's all important business of unity and reconciliation. (Interview Toronto)
>
> Interfaith is a catalyst for changing public attitudes and cooperation. (Interview Calgary)
>
> The role of interfaith is not to educate but to provide a network for faith groups. (Interview Vancouver)
>
> In the end we are all human beings. If we can meet at that very basic level then we can meet and learn and trust and ask questions. (Interview Montreal)
>
> Interfaith provides an alternative model for bridging conflicting views. It keeps influencing the margins, spreads the message that there is something to share. (Interview Montreal)
>
> Interfaith builds bridges. We can only go so far in one's faith. (Interview Halifax)

Building bridges across traditions is a common goal of Canadian grassroots interfaith efforts. Many initiatives begin with the primary intention of providing the opportunity for individuals from different faith perspectives to get to know one another better. Over time members become better acquainted with the activities and practices of

each member's faith communities. Friendships develop and stereotypes diminish. These bridging networks serve to support one another especially when issues arise, locally or globally. For example, in Montreal, the English Christian-Jewish dialogue group has issued statements against anti-religious acts of violence (e.g. response to the 2004 fire-bombing of the library at Taldos Yakov Yosef, a Jewish school in Montreal) (Interviews Montreal).

Bilateral dialogue groups in particular have network building as a common goal. Often, individual members must be invited to participate. Regular meetings are held where members or guest speakers initiate discussions through presentations on one traditional approach to a particular concept and practice that is often found in both traditions included in the dialogue group (e.g., forgiveness, mercy, prayer, marriage and seasonal celebrations). Some groups might also organize visits to worship centers where they would participate in services. Still others gather to share information about events in their own communities with the intention that each represents others within the group who will then share information and invitations with members of their home congregations to participate (Interviews Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

6.3.2. Education

> Comparative religion is done by outsiders. Interfaith is done by insiders.
> (Interview Halifax)

> Traditional interfaith model of "talking heads" does not work. In a post-religious society we need engaged activities like multifaith yoga, concerts, experiences that give more. (Interview Vancouver)

> Never go to another tradition by yourself. Bring five others with you!
> (Interview Vancouver)

> The academy needs to learn to speak in a way that doesn't make others feel stupid. (Interview Toronto)

> Religious communities need to address spiritual discord attitudes more directly. We need to learn to disagree. It is naïve to think harmony will just happen.
> (Interview Toronto)

> Stories are the heart of what religion is all about. Storytelling is a key tool for interfaith. When you tell your story you are explaining or telling about your religion. (Interview Halifax)

Education programs are another central goal of many Canadian interfaith activities, whether developed only for their members or for a broader public audience. Some of the more common interfaith education initiatives found in Canada include the following: touring houses of worship, one-of evening panel discussions, organized year-long programs, day-long conferences, interfaith worship retreats, multifaith concerts, shared meals and multi-faith centres.

Most interfaith grassroots organizations have at one point in their history organized educational visits to houses of worship. This form of interfaith education activity follows the familiar format of observing a worship service, followed by a panel presentation, Q&A, and a shared meal prepared by the host congregation. Organized public lectures are another favourite of grassroots organizations. For example, in Toronto, the Scarboro Missions Interfaith desk promotes a fall and spring "Interfaith Educational Series" of evening lectures which highlight individual speakers or panel discussions on various themes (e.g., Understanding Native Spirituality, Sacred Cinema,

Mysticism in the World's Religions, Humour in the World's Religions) (Interview Toronto). Several interfaith initiatives focus on cultural events that usually highlight music, art and food associated with different faith traditions (e.g. West Coast Sacred Music Festival in Vancouver, Sacred Arts and Music Association in Toronto). Shared worship services are also part of the outreach programs for many groups. While there are grassroots organizations that include in their future goals the establishment of some type of centre dedicated to interfaith education, the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action (since 1996), is the only exclusively interfaith education centre operating in Canada.

There are several grassroots groups who have sponsored interfaith activities in partnership with local high schools. In Montreal, the Jewish Christian dialogue group has for years organized an annual dialogue day with Jewish and Christian students who participate in workshops, panel and group discussions and share lunch. Organizers admit that it has sometimes been a challenge to attract participants. The Centre for Diversity in Toronto has been quite a success with its program that coordinates classroom visits to houses of worship. The program includes pre-visit activities that reviews expected etiquette and fields initial questions about what students can expect. At the end of the day there is also time for a post-visit discussion and a survey. This has been an extremely successful program that coordinates over one hundred and fifty religious sites visits each year and is assisting with expansion programs in other Canadian cities (Interviews Calgary, Toronto, Vancouver).

Given the clear desire of interfaith work to promote educational activities which celebrate religious diversity, it would seem natural that grassroots organizations would

team with scholars in the delivery of their programs. However, relations between religious scholars and grassroots organizations have been mixed. Several members of grassroots organizations across the country shared concerns about their experiences with scholars. Some criticized scholars for holding an elitist or overly formal approach. Others complained that their requests were always rejected. Yet some groups have incorporated locally-based scholars who have been celebrated for bringing depth to the conversation.

6.3.3 Social Justice

> Interfaith work allows us to bridge the gap between communities. Together we can recognize that sustainability activities are not just for the benefit of the environment but can also strengthen the community and links between communities. (Interview Vancouver)

> The Habitat for Humanity interfaith project is designed to build homes for disadvantaged people of all beliefs and backgrounds. Our particular group purposely invited people from diverse faith groups to participate. We learned much together. (Interview Toronto)

> There is a hunger to find meaning serving others. (Interview Toronto)

> Interfaith is best with an issue. (Interview Halifax)

Responding to social justice issues is a key motivator for many interfaith activities in Canada. Several participants commented that it was in the act of protesting, serving lunch to the homeless, or canvassing support that real friendships are forged with people from other faith traditions. For example, in Vancouver there is a Muslim-Jewish dialogue group that once each month volunteers to manage the "Feed the Hungry" soup

kitchen initiative that services homeless individuals living in the east-side Hastings district in Vancouver. The interfaith group promotes friendly competition amongst members to volunteer for the activity through their online sign-up sheet that tallies the overall percentage of Muslims and Jews filling each position. Those who participate in the activity express appreciation for the opportunity to not only provide a service to the homeless but to build friendships between Muslims and Jews in Vancouver (Interviews Vancouver).

6.3.4 Political Motivations

> Aggressive and polemical dialogues are not your best way toward understanding. We must have mutual respect. (Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith work helps to counter racism in Canada and provide support for new immigrants. (Interview Vancouver)

> Be careful. Keep interfaith away from politically charged issues. (Interview Vancouver)

In her 2007 text *Interfaith Encounters in America,* Kate McCarthy dedicated a whole chapter to interfaith organizations that came together to respond to a range of political issues including the pro-life/pro-choice debate, legalization of same-sex marriage, Christian-Jewish alliances in support of Israel, and alliances promoting the bible in schools among others (McCarthy 2007, 45-83).

Such is not the case in Canada where 'apolitical' would be a more apt descriptor. Most interfaith organizations shy away from political hot topics. In particular,

interviewees across the country identified the Israeli/Palestinian conflict as a taboo subject.

However there are a few exceptions.

The Halifax Interfaith Council (HIC) participated in several political campaigns including opposing legislation to allow Sunday shopping and supported efforts to limit or ban Video Lottery Terminals (VLTs) (Interviews Halifax). In tandem with the protest, the HIC also hosted an interfaith service for victims of VLTs (ibid).

On a national scale from 2003 to 2005 debates around the question of legalization of same-sex marriage resulted in the formation of two interfaith organizations on either side of the debate - The Interfaith Coalition on Marriage and Family (ICMF), and the Religious Coalition For Equal Marriage (RCFEM). In 2003 ICMF filed an official statement in opposition to proposed legislation for the legalization of same-sex marriage (Supreme Court of Canada 2003). The statement of facts identifies ICMF member organizations as including:

> The Islamic Society of North America (a society representing the interests of Muslims in Canada), the Catholic Civil Rights League (a lay Catholic organization dedicated to protecting religious rights and presenting Catholic positions in the public forum), and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (a national association of Evangelical Protestant churches).
>
> Supreme Court of Canada 2003, 1

The ICMF argued that it represents millions of Canadians in a variety of faith communities who are concerned that the legalization of same-sex marriage would result

in profound legal and social ramifications of religious communities who are "unable and unwilling to solemnize 'marriages' between persons of the same sex" (ibid, 3).

Alternatively the REFEM argued the proposed legislation would uphold same-sex marriage as a human right in keeping with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (REFEM, n.d.). They also recognized the legislation as offering all religious communities the opportunity to make their own choices about whether they want to perform marriage ceremonies. REFEM members include individual members associated with the following religious communities:

> Ahavat Olam Synagogue, Vancouver
> Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quaker)
> Canadian Rabbis for Equal Marriage
> Canadian Unitarian Council
> Church of the Holy Trinity (Anglican) in Toronto
> Metropolitan Community Churches in Canada
> Muslim Canadian Congress
> United Church of Canada
> World Sikh Organization
>
> REFEM n.d.

Once the same-sex marriage legislation passed in 2005, both of the above organizations disbanded, highlighting the issue-specific collaboration of the group.

6.4. Observations about Government, Academic and Grassroots Interfaith Activities in Canada

Within Canada, governments, scholars and grassroots organizations have supported the development of diverse interfaith initiatives. Although the actual numbers of individuals engaged in the work of interfaith is small, each initiative contributes to the

interfaith objective of promoting positive relations across religious traditions as a public good. Challenges remain, including the need for more resources, more dialogue and more cooperation across sectors.

CHAPTER 7: REGIONAL PROFILES OF INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES ACROSS CANADA

While it is not uncommon to find people from religious traditions other than Christian in many rural settings, in Canada it is 'the city' or large urban environments where the majority of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jews and other non-Christian faith communities live and consequently where most interfaith organizations can be found. This is especially the case when one examines interfaith activities in the major Canadian urban centers of Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax. Statistical portraits for each of the urban centres were drawn from information offered through the official website for Statistics Canada. Each regional portrait also identifies key grassroots and scholarly contributions to interfaith work in Canada.

7.1 Vancouver

> The city is an artificial environment. There is a disconnect. Dialogue allows us to begin to see each other and our common values. (Interview Vancouver)

> Traditional religion is declining. There is a rise in organic spirituality. What is scared? Nature? Children? Humanity? Finding the sacred will lead to sustainability. (Interview Vancouver)

> In Vancouver there are many conservative religious groups that are flourishing. Muslims are highly concerned with immigration issues. First Nations are preoccupied with healing and justice. Roman Catholics are conservative. It is not easy to get people out to interfaith activities (Interview Vancouver)

> There are too many interfaith activities for interested people to attend all of them. (Interview Vancouver)

> Vancouver is hugely secular. Hugely practice oriented of spiritual activities. There are many people who don't have a religious home. The spiritual but not religious are looking for a community. (Interview Vancouver)

Vancouver is the third largest city in Canada and home to the largest Asian population – it is projected that by 2025 more than 50% of the population will be of Asian descent making Vancouver the largest Asian population outside Asia and the Pacific Rim (Adams 2007, 14). As such it is not surprising that Vancouver is also home to the largest population of people who claim no religion at 35% - see Table 11. As mentioned in the introduction, growth within the "no religion" category is due in part to increases within non-Christian immigrant populations, particularly from Asian countries who have found it difficult to choose a single religious affiliation because of the need to perform as required a range of religious practices or social customs associated with ancestor worship, folk traditions, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shintoism and/or Taoism. However, the "no-religion" census category also includes those who have transferred religious affiliation from a nominal Christian identity to "none", as it more closely aligns with secularist attitudes or personalized spiritual practice over a traditional Christian religious identity (James 1999; Statistics Canada 2003b).[27]

Vancouver is unique in Canada due to its large non-religious population; all practising religious communities are minorities in the city, even the Christian communities. Altogether Christians make up less than 50% of the population which is

[27] As was noted earlier under Table 1, the category of religious affiliation: none, has recorded the most significant growth of any religious category recorded by Statistics Canada starting with just 3% in 1971; 8.3% in 1981; 13.7% in 1991, 16.8% in 2001, and 23.6% in 2011 (Statistics Canada 2013). Growth in this category is due in part to increases within non-Christian immigrant populations, particularly from Asian countries who have found it difficult to choose a single religious affiliation because of the need to perform as required a range of religious practices or social customs associated with ancestor worship, folk traditions, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shintoism and/or Taoism. However, the "no-religion" census category also includes those who have transferred religious affiliation from a nominal Christian identity to "none", as it more closely aligns with secularist attitudes or personalized spiritual practice over a traditional Christian religious identity (James 1999; Statistics Canada 2003b).

split amongst Roman Catholics (18%), United Church (7.6 %), Anglican (6.3%), Lutheran (2.2 %) and Presbyterian (0.9%) with the remaining 10% spread among other minority Christian communities including many immigrant Christian communities (see Table 11).

Table 11
Religious Populations of Vancouver

Selected Religions	2001	% of Pop.	2001	% of Pop.
	CANADA		VANCOUVER	
Total population	**29,639,030**	**100.00%**	**1,967,475**	**100.00%**
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	43.20%	360,620	18.30%
No religion	4,796,325	16.20%	676,175	34.40%
United Church	2,839,125	9.60%	149,295	7.60%
Anglican	2,035,500	6.90%	123,905	6.30%
Christian not elsewhere	780,450	2.60%	101,625	5.20%
Baptist	729,470	2.50%	49,105	2.50%
Lutheran	606,590	2.00%	43,000	2.20%
Muslim	579,640	2.00%	52,590	2.70%
Protestant not elsewhere	549,205	1.90%	34,535	1.80%
Presbyterian	409,830	1.40%	17,180	0.90%
Pentecostal	369,475	1.20%	17,690	0.90%
Jewish	329,995	1.10%	17,275	0.90%
Buddhist	300,345	1.00%	74,550	3.80%
Hindu	297,200	1.00%	27,410	1.40%
Sikh	278,410	0.90%	99,005	5.00%
Greek Orthodox	215,175	0.70%	10,815	0.50%
Orthodox not elsewhere	191,465	0.60%	9,535	0.50%
Jehovah's Witnesses	165,420	0.60%	10,775	0.50%
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	154,750	0.50%	5,220	0.30%
Other Evangelical Christians	126,200	0.40%	18,770	0.95%
Non-denominational	62,880	0.20%	2,390	0.10%
Aboriginal spirituality	32,720	0.10%	1,560	0.10%
Pagan	25,730	0.10%	2,625	0.10%

Source: Statistics Canada. Selected Religions by Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories - 20% Sample Data

With a history of immigration from the Pacific Rim and South Asian countries, Vancouver has large Sikh, Hindu, and Buddhist populations. As a result approximately two of every five Vancouverites maintain a non-Christian affiliation, increasing the potential for interfaith encounters. As Table 11 shows:

- Sikhs represent the largest non-Christian population at 5% or 99,000, almost doubling in size between 1991 and 2001.
- Buddhists are the second largest non-Christian population at 3.8% or just under 75,000, more than doubling in the last decade with growth of 135%.
- At 2.7%, Muslims are the third largest non-Christian population, and like the Buddhist community have more than doubled their size in the last decade.
- The Hindu population has also experienced considerable growth and in 2001 surpassed the Jewish population of Vancouver.
- That the median age for most non-Christian faith communities is firmly within child-bearing years which suggests a strong potential for future growth. Conversely, the media age for most Christian traditions is on the upper end of child-bearing years suggesting a negative growth trajectory.

With such religious diversity it may be expected that interfaith organizations would also reflect this diversity. In many respects this is the case for the two long-standing interfaith organizations: the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society (VMAS) and the Pacific Interfaith Citizens Association (PICA). As explained earlier, PICA formed as a representative organization with members from the Roman Catholic, Sikh, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Baha'i communities (see history section above). The VMAS Society opted for an independent organizational structure that initially attracted a large Christian membership from mostly Anglican and United Church communities. However, the dialogue of life or social justice agenda of the organization has from the first days attracted many individuals from the Unitarian, Jewish, Baha'i, Zoroastrian, Sikh, Hindu,

Buddhist and, more recently, Muslim communities. Both organizations have sponsored many formal and informal events over the years. For example, the main focus of VMAS has been to provide inter-religious education and social justice activities to Vancouverites. Social justice interfaith activities coordinated by the group include the founding of the Vancouver food bank and support of various programs to assist the homeless. While inter-religious education outreach efforts to schools was more of a priority in the 1990s, efforts have shifted toward projects aimed at promoting religious diversity to the general public through initiatives like the interfaith calendar (since 1996), greening sacred spaces project, day-long conferences and/or dialogue workshops, and public outings to worship spaces in the community.

Vancouver is also home to several interfaith initiatives that promote shared worship practices including meditation retreats, a sacred music festival, sacred poetry, Suffi circles and, in a nod to the British roots of many in the province, the annual Commonwealth Day interfaith service. Many of these interfaith activities are open to individuals from traditional and non-traditional faith communities. That is, individuals who pursue a more spiritual than traditional religious practice are more often attracted to the shared interfaith worship activities than the more formal interfaith dialogue exercises, worship site visits or conferences organized by PICA and VMAS.

In 2006 there was a concerted effort by members from interfaith organizations, select faith communities and spiritual practices in Vancouver to create an Interspiritual Centre that would initially serve athletes of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics. After the games, it was hoped that the center would become a shared interspiritual place where Vancouverites could celebrate their religious diversity. Although enthusiasm was high,

and the original organizers received approval in principle from both the municipality and Olympic organizing team, the dream was not realized in time for the Olympics (Todd, 2008). There remains a small group interested in pursuing construction of such a center, perhaps on the property of the Unitarian Church but discussions about the endeavour have been stalled since 2008.

Long-term bi-lateral, trilateral or multilateral dialogue of belief groups dedicated to deep dialogue about foundational beliefs and practices of the religious traditions are not a common interfaith activity in Vancouver. The fieldwork research revealed only one small informal bi-lateral dialogue group of less than twenty independent Muslims and Jews who had recently formed a dialogue of peace to grapple with the volatile Israeli/Palestinian conflict. This group is unique in several ways. First, unlike many dialogue groups in Canada that clearly steer away from political issues, it is the focus of this group. Secondly, although members of the group live in Vancouver or the lower mainland, the major method for exchange is via the internet using a Google group format. The email exchanges most often consist of sharing articles that either promote or diminish either side in the conflict. Occasionally the theme or tone of the information posted will initiate a more heated debate, and on two occasions, members have written passionate posts denouncing the positions of particular members as part of their exit from the group. Third, the only in-person connection within the group occurred once a month when members of the group volunteered to serve in the "Feed the Hungry" soup kitchen initiative (described above in Chapter 6.3). Members indicated that the activity served to both offer the opportunity to dialogue while also providing service for the homeless in Vancouver (Interviews Vancouver).

Vancouver is also home to several academic forums that host interfaith activities. However, a common comment by members of the grassroots community was the limited exchange or involvement with either faculty or chaplaincy services at either university. In 2009, the Vancouver School of Theology (VST) opened the Iona Pacific Inter-Religious Centre for Social Action, Research and Contemplative Practice to provide students of VST and University of British Columbia with opportunities to find new ways of facing critical local and global challenges of the increasingly inter-religious and multi-cultural world (Iona Pacific Interreligious Centre webpage). The VST is also home to the Vancouver chapter of the Thomas Merton Society a group that celebrates the interfaith teachings of the respected theologian Thomas Merton through an annual series of guest lectures and annual conference. VST also regularly hosts public events with invited speakers or panels that often address interfaith and intercultural issues. In 2006, the VST worked with VMAS to host the annual North American Interfaith Network meeting. From 2007 to 2010, Simon Fraser University also sponsored an Interfaith Summer Institute that developed and delivered a series of intensive social activist programs designed for faith practitioners interested in building interfaith alliances for justice and peace movement activism.

Although Vancouver is home to several grassroots interfaith groups and the Vancouver School of Theology, aside from the rare request for PICA representatives to provide input, interfaith work sponsored by government is limited to supporting multifaith chaplaincies in hospital programs. The city has not created or an interfaith council.

7.2 Toronto

> In Toronto everything is interfaith. We get along with each other not despite our differences but in spite of them. It is totally God-driven. (Interview Toronto)

> Interfaith is alive and well. It is growing on many different levels; levels of educational institutions, even in government, corporations, and judicial systems. (Interview Toronto)

> Interfaith hasn't changed the way I understand my faith. All, every human being has been created in the image of God. (Interview Toronto)

> There is very little organized interfaith activity in Toronto. It is sporadic. There are some very interesting and devout individuals involved, but not a lot of information about activities. (Interview Toronto)

> Interfaith is a work in progress. The multifaith environment we live in includes 150 languages. Behind every tongue is a different culture, a different religious belief. Not all communities are open to interpenetration. (Interview Toronto)

Toronto is the largest of Canadian cities with an overall population of 4.5 million in the greater metropolitan area and is home to the largest visible minority population in Canada. A common destination for many immigrants, Toronto is also home to some of the largest religious communities in Canada. Christianity continues to maintain majority status with two-thirds of the population claiming affiliation, a figure split almost evenly between Catholics and Protestant traditions (See Table 12).

Table 12
Religious Populations of Toronto

Selected Religions	2001	% of Pop.	2001	% of Pop.
	CANADA		TORONTO	
Total population	**29,639,030**	**100.00%**	**4,647,955**	**100.00%**
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	43.20%	1,553,710	33.40%
No religion	4,796,325	16.20%	770,850	16.60%
United Church	2,839,125	9.60%	320,880	6.90%
Anglican	2,035,500	6.90%	321,580	6.90%
Christian not elsewhere	780,450	2.60%	160,415	3.50%
Baptist	729,470	2.50%	99,580	2.10%
Lutheran	606,590	2.00%	49,045	1.10%
Muslim	579,640	2.00%	254,110	5.50%
Protestant not elsewhere	549,205	1.90%	82,080	1.80%
Presbyterian	409,830	1.40%	79,090	1.70%
Pentecostal	369,475	1.20%	61,960	1.30%
Jewish	329,995	1.10%	164,510	3.50%
Buddhist	300,345	1.00%	97,170	2.10%
Hindu	297,200	1.00%	191,305	4.10%
Sikh	278,410	0.90%	90,590	1.90%
Greek Orthodox	215,175	0.70%	81,615	1.80%
Orthodox not elsewhere	191,465	0.60%	65,195	1.40%
Jehovah's Witnesses	165,420	0.60%	20,625	0.40%
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	154,750	0.50%	5,760	0.10%
Other Evangelical Christians	126,200	0.40%	52,235	1.12%
Non-denominational	62,880	0.20%	2,920	0.10%
Aboriginal spirituality	32,720	0.10%	1,090	0.00%
Pagan	25,730	0.10%	2,415	0.10%

Source: Statistics Canada. Selected Religions by Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories - 20% Sample Data
http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/release/release8.cfm

With almost one in three Torontonians maintaining a non-Christian affiliation the potential for Christian encounters with non-Christians is significant. As Table 12 shows:

- The "no religion" population of Toronto reflects the national average at 16.6%, a figure that has grown by more than 39% in the past decade in part due to a rise in arrival of immigrants from Asian countries.

- The Muslim population is the largest non-Christian tradition in Toronto (and in Canada) with a population that is almost three times above the national average. However as Islam, like Christianity, is a proselytizing faith tradition with over one billion adherents around the world, the ethnic, cultural and theological distinctions within the *ummah* or community of believers do not always meld into a cohesive community. In Toronto, growth in the Muslim population since the 1990s has created a noticeable shift from the small, fairly cohesive but ethnically and theologically diverse early community to the increasing development of distinct Muslim communities which often reflect specific ethnic, language and cultural tendencies.
- As in Vancouver, the Hindu population of Toronto more than doubled their population between 1991 and 2001 and has surpassed the Jewish population to become the second largest non-Christian population. Buddhists rank fourth with Sikhs fifth in size of religious community in the region. As with the Muslim community, growth has in many respects served to highlight distinct cultural, religious and theological approaches to religious practice resulting in the increasing development of independent Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh communities.

In Toronto, the large populations of diverse religious communities certainly fulfill Pedersen's requirement of a multireligious population with significant minority communities as the catalyst for interfaith activity (Pedersen 2004). However, interfaith activity is not as widespread as one might expect.

With a substantial Christian population, including key Christian institutions like the Roman Catholic Archdiocese Toronto and several head offices for Canadian churches (United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian, Canadian Council of Churches), coupled with the presence of large active divinity schools at the University of Toronto, Toronto is home to a number of Christian-driven formal bilateral dialogue groups with representative membership structures. The Canadian Council of Churches is involved in several national interfaith dialogue groups including the Canadian Christian Muslim Liaison Committee, the Canadian Christian Jewish Consultation, the World Religions Canada (Canadian Chapter of World Religions for Peace), and an Interfaith Liaison

Committee.[28] Interfaith dialogue representatives from the member Christian communities are most often paid employees from the head offices of each denominational church who are responsible for the ecumenical/interfaith relations portfolios. As employees, they prefer to host interfaith meeting during working hours. The preference for day time meetings, reliance on a representative model, and the challenge of negotiating driving distances in Toronto have all been mentioned by members of the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities as key factors that have limited their participation in these types of dialogue initiatives (Interviews Toronto).

Outside the Canadian Council of Churches' activities, interfaith officers are often responsible for fostering both ecumenical and interfaith relations on behalf of their respective organizations. As an example, for more than a decade the ecumenical/interfaith officer of the United Church has been engaged in overseeing several working group dialogue projects to encourage understanding and cooperation across faith communities directed specifically to building positive relationships with Jewish, Muslim and First Nations communities (Interview Toronto). The Scarboro Mission is a Catholic organization that also hosts a number of formal and informal interfaith awareness activities in Toronto and abroad (Interview Toronto). Supportive of formal Catholic and Jewish dialogue, the Scarboro Mission has extended its interfaith educational outreach efforts to the general public sponsoring a seasonal interfaith lecture series. The Mission is also well-known internationally for their "Golden Rule" project

[28] The Council of Churches Interfaith Liaison Committee is actually an ecumenical effort that brings together the ecumenical/interfaith officers from the head offices of the various mainline protestant Christian traditions located in Toronto including Anglican, Presbyterian, and United Church.

that promotes the shared ethic of reciprocity found in faith traditions the world over as an entry point for interfaith work (ibid).

The city is also home to several notable grassroots interfaith initiatives. For more than twenty years, upwards of 400 participants from seven Christian and two Jewish congregations within the Forrest Hill borough have gathered to dialogue over dinner. Christian participants hail from Roman Catholic, Baptist, Anglican, Lutheran, and United Church congregations, with Jewish participants coming from the Reform and Conservative synagogues in the district. An official program for the event includes messages from each participating religious community, advertisements and promotion of the subject addressed by the invited guest speaker – a position that alternates from year to year between Christian and Jewish speakers. Although the event has been held for many years it was only in 2005 that Jewish and Christian participants were asked to sit at the same tables over dinner. That is prior to 2005, the Jewish participants would all sit together at their tables and the Christians sat together at their tables. Since 2005 there has been a concerted effort to ensure each table includes individuals from both traditions to encourage dialogue over dinner.

Since 1987, the "Out of the Cold" initiative has brought together volunteers from nineteen Toronto area synagogues, churches and faith communities to serve as "host sites" for the homeless during the winter months. In 1988, Habitat for Humanity Toronto was founded with the mission of building homes for low-income people. Although founded as a non-denominational Christian organization, several 'builds' have relied on interfaith volunteer teams to complete the project who come together to "live out" their faith.

The *Interfaith Unity* newsletter has from 2002 provided bi-monthly updates on interfaith activities within Toronto and Southern Ontario to individual subscribers via email (InterUnity website 2007). Postings are provided by the individual event organizers. Over the past few years the newsletter has been pushed to quarterly distribution, with diminished listings of local activities. In the fall of 2012, the newsletter stopped publication. Instead, the Interfaith Unity website directs subscribers to the "News and Listings for Canadian Interfaith Activities" now housed within the website *The Interfaith Observer* (TIO) (ibid 2013). TIO is an online newsletter self-described as a "free monthly electronic journal created to explore interreligious relations and the interfaith movement as a whole" (TIO website 2013). Since its launch in 2011, it has published advice and articles by "more than 200 interfaith activists, young and old" (ibid). In September 2011, the TIO Canadian page has been identified as an example for other countries and regions to also add sections for promoting interfaith work (ibid). To date the TIO Canada page is the only region represented outside the United States.

In 2007, with much fanfare, the Toronto Interfaith Council was created. The council brings together more than 50 faith communities making it the most inclusive formal interfaith organization in Canada (see Figure 5). Since then the interfaith work focus has been primarily directed towards the creation of a mission statement and hosting an annual interfaith breakfast with the Mayor, but some members expressed high hopes to one day establish an interfaith centre (Interviews Toronto).

Figure 5
Toronto Area Interfaith Council Representatives at 2009 Annual Breakfast
Faith Group/ Faith Community/Organization

Toronto Area Interfaith Council Representatives at 2009 Annual Breakfast

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community	Anglican Diocese of Toronto
Assisi Interfaith Loordes	Association of Progressive Muslims
Bahá'í Community of Toronto	Baptist Convention
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization	British Methodist Episcopal Church
Canadian Council of Imams – OMC	Canadian Jewish Congress
Canadian Intercultural Dialogue Centre	Canadian Muslim Union
Canadian Turkish Friendship Community	Christian Jewish Dialogue
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints	Church of Scientology
Diversity Centre, CCCJ	Encounter World Religions Centre
Evangelical Lutheran Church	Faith & the Common Good
Federation Hindu Temples	First Nations Community
Fo Guang Shan Temple	Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Canada
Gurshikh Sabha Sikh Community	Guru Ram Dass Sikh Ashram
Hare Krishna/ ISKON	Himalaya Meditation Society
Interfaith Unity	InterSpirtuality Centre
Intl. Buddhist Progress Society Toronto	Islamic Foundation of Toronto
Islamic Iranian Center of Imam Ali	Jain Society of Toronto
L'Arche Canada	Masjid Toronto
Mennonite Central Committee	Ontario Multifaith Council
Presbyterian Church of Canada	Religious Society of Friends
Roman Catholic Church, Toronto Archdiocese	Roman Catholic Mission Native Ministry
Salvation Army	Sant Nirankari Mission
Scarboro Missions	SGI
Shia Ismaili Muslim Community	Shia Muslim Community
Sikh Community of Ontario	Spirituality at Work Centre
Tengye Ling Tibetan Buddhist Centre	Toronto Board of Rabbis
Toronto Buddhist Church	Turkish Islamic Community
Unitarian Congregations of Greater Toronto	United Church
United Church Toronto Conference	Universal Worship
Vedanta Society of Toronto	Vedic Centre, Markham
Zoroastrian Community	

Source: Copy of invitation provided by interviewee.

In 2007 the University of Toronto opened the Multi-faith Centre for Spiritual Study and Practice, a center managed by the Multifaith Chaplaincy. The centre includes a main activity hall that can be adapted to accommodate the worship needs of different faith traditions, a meditation room and a multi-service room where various interfaith activities take place throughout the academic year. The University is also home to the Department and Centre for Studies in Religion and the Toronto School of Theology which collectively include in their programs lectures and seminars with interfaith themes. However, as in Vancouver, some grassroots participants suggested that there were limited exchanges with local scholars.

Toronto is home for the main office of the Ontario Multifaith Council (OMC) which provides Ontario government institutions with input on managing religious diversity within healthcare, corrections services and group homes. The OMC hosts an annual conference with the focus of spiritual care and with chaplains, healthcare professionals and administrators being the primary participants. The OMC hosts a resource library and also fields calls from the public. There is limited interaction with scholars or grassroots organizations.

7.3 Montreal

> Montreal is like a cup of Noah's pudding, a natural place for interfaith dialogue. There are so many cultures living peacefully. [Montreal] is one of the best models of co-existence. Walk the talk and over time it will make a huge difference in the lives of those around us. (Interview Montreal)

> There is lots of talk but little action. (Interview Montreal)

> In Montreal the only problem is that you run into people who are dogmatic about the exclusivity of their religious and cultural identity. (Interview Montreal)

> In Quebec secularists are the new orthodoxy. There is a great distinction between English and French. (Interview Montreal)

> Interfaith in Montreal has a lot of goodwill. It is pretty positive. (Interview Montreal)

Montreal is the second largest Canadian city with 3.3 million people. The religious profile is distinctive. The province is home to the largest French speaking population outside of France, a population that has traditionally held to the Roman Catholic tradition. As Table 13 shows, the religious population statistics for Montreal reflects that reputation with over 74% claiming affiliation with the Roman Catholic tradition, albeit a largely nominal or high holy days affiliation with less than 15% active in the church community. Traditionally Protestant communities in Montreal tended to cluster within the English speaking population and represents just 9.8% of the population. As the percentage change column demonstrates, other than the evangelical traditions, most Protestant populations have experienced negative growth throughout the 1990s, a trend expected to continue especially given the median age of the community well into the late 40s beyond child-bearing years.

Table 13
Religious Populations of Montreal

Selected Religions	2001	% of Pop.	2001	% of Pop.
	CANADA		MONTREAL	
Total population	**29,639,030**	**100.00%**	**3,380,640**	**100.00%**
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	43.20%	2,510,335	74.30%
No religion	4,796,325	16.20%	250,600	7.40%
United Church	2,839,125	9.60%	32,530	1.00%
Anglican	2,035,500	6.90%	43,875	1.30%
Christian not elsewhere	780,450	2.60%	37,440	1.10%
Baptist	729,470	2.50%	22,240	0.70%
Lutheran	606,590	2.00%	7,230	0.20%
Muslim	579,640	2.00%	100,185	3.00%
Protestant not elsewhere	549,205	1.90%	48,975	1.40%
Presbyterian	409,830	1.40%	6,000	0.20%
Pentecostal	369,475	1.20%	13,120	0.40%
Jewish	329,995	1.10%	88,765	2.60%
Buddhist	300,345	1.00%	37,835	1.10%
Hindu	297,200	1.00%	24,075	0.70%
Sikh	278,410	0.90%	7,930	0.20%
Greek Orthodox	215,175	0.70%	48,445	1.40%
Orthodox not elsewhere	191,465	0.60%	34,225	1.00%
Jehovah's Witnesses	165,420	0.60%	15,180	0.40%
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	154,750	0.50%	2,825	0.10%
Other Evangelical Christians	126,200	0.40%	10,600	0.31%
Non-denominational	62,880	0.20%	230	0.00%
Aboriginal spirituality	32,720	0.10%	195	0.00%
Pagan	25,730	0.10%	845	0.00%

Source: Statistics Canada. Selected Religions by Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories - 20% Sample Data

Other trends notable from Table 13 include:

- Significant growth in the "no religion" population from 1991-2001 representing 7% of the population. However, unlike Toronto and Vancouver the Asian influence is low. This suggests the "no religion" group is perhaps more reflective of those who have rejected a Christian identity in exchange for the strong secularist attitudes promoted throughout the province in the wake of the Quiet Revolution.

- The Muslim community grew 143% from 1991 to 2001 surpassing the Jewish population to become the largest non-Christian population in Montreal
- The Buddhist community has also experienced healthy growth of 35%
- While Sikhs and Hindus represent just under 1% of the total population, both communities have grown significantly throughout the 1990s during the last decade

The distinct religious profile of Montreal has certainly influenced the development of interfaith activities in the city. With more than 92% of the population affiliated with monotheistic Abrahamic traditions of Christianity, Judaism, and more recently Islam, interfaith initiatives tend more toward formal bilateral dialogues that explore various theological positions with the aim of building strong respectful relationships amongst dialogue partners. Public events are few as efforts to bridge religious diversity are often complicated by linguistic and political considerations that define the French Catholic dominated centre. Nonetheless, there have been notable interfaith activities.

There are both English and French language bilateral dialogue groups that bring together individuals from the Abrahamic traditions in the following formats: Christian/Jewish, Jewish/Muslim, Muslim/Christian. The longest standing dialogue group is bilingual (but mostly English-speaking). The Christian/Jewish dialogue group began in the late 1960s and continues to meet eight to ten times each year (September to June). The group follows an informal representative model where individuals are appointed to the committee by their respective faith traditions but no effort has been made to formalize the group. Christian representatives come from various Roman

Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, United Church, Eastern Orthodox and Unitarian Churches. Jewish representatives are appointed by the local chapter of the Canadian Jewish Congress and include individuals from the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox expressions of the tradition. Monthly meetings attract twenty to twenty-five people and almost always include a speaker (often an academic from one of the four universities in Montreal), who introduces a theme found in both traditions followed by open discussion (e.g. forgiveness, faith, prayer, God, sacred texts, idolatry, etc), although several members clearly explained that politics are not welcome at the table. Since the late 1980s, the group has hosted an annual high school dialogue where students from Christian and Jewish high schools come together for a day-long workshop. The group also coordinates the annual Shoah Commemorative Services at Christ Church Cathedral to memorialize those who perished in the Holocaust. When required the group will issue public statements but only in relation to local issues (e.g. denouncing the defacing of gravestone at a local Jewish cemetery). Several members from the Christian/Jewish dialogue group are also active members of either the Jewish/Muslim or Muslim/Christian dialogue groups and the Montreal Interfaith Council.

The Montreal Interfaith Council is another long-standing interfaith initiative. Established in 1989 as an informal representative group, it brings together individuals from the same mainline Christian denominations as in the Christian/Jewish dialogue group (often the same people too), and representatives from Conservative Judaism, Sunni Muslim, Baha'i, Zen Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism and occasionally Longhouse Mohawk traditions. The main objective of the group is to build networks between the communities so as to promote understanding and respectful appreciation of

religious traditions practised in Montreal. To that end, the group meets six to eight times each year to discuss similarities and differences in belief and practice across traditions. They also regularly host visits to religious sites throughout the city where guests will participate in a worship service followed by a shared meal and question / answer sessions. On request, group members will visit local schools to introduce students to various faith traditions from a practitioner perspective. With so many long-term members, the Montreal Interfaith Council has been reflecting on the need to introduce new members to the group to ensure its ongoing contribution to interfaith awareness in Montreal. In 2011, the Montreal Interfaith Council relinquished their responsibility to coordinate the religious sites visit program giving over the administration to the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism (CCE).

The main mandate of the CCE is to provide resources, French and English, for Christian churches engaged in ecumenical activities. However, since the late 1990s, the CCE has also become a key institutional support for several interfaith organizations including the Montreal Interfaith Council, the Christian-Jewish Dialogue group and *Comité de dialogue musulmans-chrétiens Québec* (CCE website 2010; Interviews Montreal). The bilingual status of the CCE and its staff makes it one of the few places for bridging the language divide that marks Montreal interfaith organizations.

Although there is significant cross-over amongst members of interfaith dialogue groups conducted in English, there remains a clear divide between French and English interfaith organizations. With the exception of the bilingual Montreal Christian – Jewish dialogue group, within the French speaking community there are only a few formal bilateral dialogue groups. An example of a formal approach to dialogue is found in the

Comité de dialogue musulmans-chrétiens Québec (CMCQ). The CMCQ is the provincial chapter of the larger National Muslim Christian Liaison Committee of Canada. Although the National committee was founded in 1984, the Quebec chapter began only in 2001 (Interview Montreal; Interreligieux website 2010). The original committee included ten members–five Muslims and five Christians with seven from Montreal and three from Quebec City (ibid). The initial goal of the group was to meet five times each year. Over the first three years the key activity was to formally establish the mission and guidelines for the committee (see Figure 6 – three pages). On four occasions members of the group participated in radio dialogue session on the Montreal public broadcaster Radio Ville-Marie (Interviews Montreal). However, by 2006 it was difficult for the committee to maintain equitable representation for meetings. Christians were always well-represented in that they were appointed to the committee by their respective communities. However, there was only sporadic participation by Muslim members who often explained that they had too many family and community commitments which made it difficult to attend the dialogue sessions. The website www.intereligieux.org has posted the names and activities of the committee, however the last official meeting was held in the September 2008.

Figure 6
***Comité de dialogue musulmans-chrétiens du Quebec*. Status 2004.**

S T A T U T S (rédigés en 2004)
Comité de dialogue musulmans-chrétiens du Québec

"Dialoguer, c'est passer au-delà des frontières de ses propres convictions pour essayer, le temps du dialogue, de se mettre de coeur et d'esprit à la place de l'autre, sans rien renoncer de soi-même, mais pour comprendre, juger et apprécier ce qu'il y a de vrai, de bon et d'utile, dans la pensée, les sentiments, l'action de l'autre. Il s'agit de mettre provisoirement entre parenthèses ce qu'on est, ce qu'on pense, pour comprendre et apprécier positivement, même sans le partager, le point de vue de l'autre. Il y a là un profond renoncement à soi." (D. Pire, Nobel de la Paix, 1958)

(Continued…)

ARTICLE I : NATURE du COMITÉ

Ce Comité, établi en août 2001 est formé de chrétiens et de musulmans désireux de favoriser les meilleures relations entre les croyants des deux religions et d'encourager le travail de dialogue au Québec.

I.1 dialogue: le terme couvre un large éventail de formes de rencontre et de collaboration réciproque, telles que le dialogue de bon voisinage, le dialogue de l'action, le dialogue de l'expérience spirituelle, et le dialogue doctrinal.

I.2 musulmans-chrétiens: le projet poursuivi par les membres du Comité se situe au plan interpersonnel et non pas au plan institutionnel entre Islam et Christianisme; les membres du comité parlent et agissent en leur nom propre, sur la base de leur expérience de foi et de leurs convictions personnelles; ils ne sont ni des représentants, ni des délégués, ni des mandataires de leur communauté d'appartenance.

I.3 du Québec: le comité, formé de personnes provenant de divers Comités locaux de dialogue, projette d'étendre éventuellement son action auprès de l'ensemble du Québec. C'est dans leur milieu de vie naturel que les membres du Comité s'engagent en tout premier lieu dans des expériences ou des projets de dialogue. C'est là qu'ils prennent position et posent des gestes publics en faveur du rapprochement entre communautés musulmanes et communautés chrétiennes.

ARTICLE II : BUT ET OBJECTIFS

II.1 Le BUT poursuivi par le Comité est de favoriser le rapprochement, la compréhension et la collaboration entre membres des communautés musulmanes et chrétiennes au Québec.

II.2 Pour réaliser ce but, les membres du Comité se fixent comme objectifs d'être:

a. un réseau d'INFORMATION : Le comité doit être un lieu où circule l'information au sujet de ce qui se passe au Québec en fait d'expériences de dialogue et de rapprochement entre musulmans et chrétiens. Par ses réunions et l'utilisation des moyens électroniques, il établit et maintient un contact étroit entre les membres. Il tient l'ensemble des membres au courant des activités qui touchent, de près ou de loin, aux relations entre les deux communautés.

b. un réseau de DIALOGUE : Le comité est d'abord et avant tout un lieu de rencontre, d'échange et de ressourcement pour ses membres À travers échanges et réflexions personnelles les membres approfondissent leur connaissance de leurs traditions religieuses respectives et s'habilitent ainsi à aider leur communauté d'appartenance à relever le défi de la convivialité interreligieuse.

c. un réseau d'INTERVENTION : Le Comité organise ou apporte sa contribution à différentes activités orchestrées par des groupes de dialogue, signature de pétitions, rencontres interreligieuses, publications, films, conférences. Le Comité peut servir de référence ou de ressource pour supporter la création de groupes locaux de dialogue ou de rencontre spirituelle entre musulmans et chrétiens. il peut aussi jouer un rôle d'aviseur auprès d'instances institutionnelles qui le sollicitent. initiatives de dialogue et de rencontres inter-religieuses. Différents moyens sont mis en oeuvre : participation à des manifestations publiques pour des causes liées au dialogue, soutien à des

ARTICLE III : COMPOSITION du Comité

III.1 Le Comité est composé d'hommes et de femmes issus de communautés musulmanes et chrétiennes présentes au Québec qui se sentent interpellés par le défi de la rencontre interreligieuse, En participant aux travaux du Comité, ces personnes se donnent l'occasion d'approfondir leur expérience de dialogue et de consolider leur motivation à poursuivre leur effort de promotion de formes de rapprochement entre les communautés musulmanes et chrétiennes d'une part, entre ces communautés de foi et la société québécoise d'autre part.

(Continued…)

III.2 De façon ponctuelle, et en accord avec le groupe, tout membre du Comité peut, en raison de ses compétences particulières, inviter une personne qui n'est pas membre du Comité à une réunion à titre d'"observateur/observatrice" ou de personne-ressource.

III.3 Les personnes invitées à être membres du Comité le sont sur la base de leurs convictions et de leur engagement concret dans le dialogue interreligieux. Les nouveaux membres sont co-optés par l'un/e des membres du Comité et acceptés par consensus du groupe.

ARTICLE IV : Structure et fonctionnement

IV. 1 Pour assurer son bon fonctionnement, le Comité désigne deux de ses membres comme co-présidents, une personne d'appartenance chrétienne et l'autre d'appartenance musulmane. Ces personnes sont principalement chargées de représenter le comité auprès de divers organismes et instances du milieu ambiant. Un autre membre assume les fonctions de secrétaire du Comité. Les personnes qui exercent ces différentes responsabilités sont choisies par consensus pour une durée d'un an, lors de la première rencontre annuelle..À la fin de chaque séance, le Comité confiera à un/e membre du Comité la tâche de modérateur/trice pour la rencontre qui suit.

IV. 2 Le Comité se réunit au minimum quatre fois l'an, dont au moins une fois à Québec, en des temps qui tiennent compte du rythme de vie de la société québécoise, soit : octobre ; janvier ; fin-mars/début-avril ; lère quinzaine de juin.

IV.3 L'essentiel des rencontres est consacré à l'entraînement au dialogue grâce à des moments de ressourcement, des temps de formation et d'apprentissage avec participation d'invités spéciaux et des moments réservés aux discussions libres sur les divers aspects de la convivialité interreligieuse au sein de la culture et de la société québécoise. Une des rencontres annuelles devrait faire place à une activité de formation.

IV.4 Un minimum de temps est consacré aux questions organisationnelles : élections, révision de procédures, choix des lieu-date-sujet de la prochaine rencontre…

IV.5 La durée des réunions sera de 11h30 ou 13h30, à 16h30 pour les réunions ordinaires; de 10h. à 17h. pour les sessions de formation.

IV.6 Les membres peuvent utiliser la langue de leur choix dans les deliberations

IV.7 Les décisions se prennent par consensus.

IV.8 Étant un organisme non officiel, le financement des activités du Comité ainsi que les frais encourus par la participation à ses réunions sont assumés par les membres eux-mêmes ou par des organismes qui les appuient financièrement. Lorsque des projets d'envergure nécessiteront de faire appel à des subventions; l'acceptation de ces subventions devra respecter l'autonomie du Comité et faciliter la poursuite de ses objectifs.

ARTICLE V : Déroulement habituel des réunions

- prière d'ouverture
- accueil des nouveaux membres / proposition de nouveaux membres.:
- témoignage / partage / échanges personnels…
- points de discussion à ajouter à l'ordre du jour et adoption de cet ordre du jour …
- approbation du compte rendu de la réunion précédente
- échange d'informations : récentes rencontres de dialogue; fixer les réunions à venir.
- discussion des points d'ordre du jour présentés au début de la réunion:
- projets éventuels à entreprendre, promotion des buts du comité.!
- répartir les tâches pour réunion suivante: temps de prière; animation; lieu de réunion:
- prière finale

Source website: www.interreligion.net Accessed March 15, 2010.

There have been other French bilateral dialogue groups including the Judeo Muslim Friendship Quebec which began in the 1990s but it has not met since 2004 (Interviews Montreal).

Within Quebec, the Roman Catholic Church has actively promoted interfaith relations. In particular the *l'Assemblée des évêques catholiques du Québec* (AECQ), hosts a committee focused on interfaith work called *Le Comité sur les rapports interculturels et interreligieux* (CRII) (AECQ website, March 2010). The main focus of the committee is to provide Roman Catholics and Roman Catholic institutions in Quebec with resources for engaging religious diversity in Quebec. In particular, the committee has the three point mandate to:

1. Informer sur les enjeux actuels auxquels le Québec est confronté par la présence de personnes d'origines culturelles et de religions diverses, y compris les Autochtones.
2. Aider l'Assemblée à se situer sur les questions relatives aux rapports interreligieux.
3. Suggérer à l'Assemblée des moyens pour mieux se situer face aux relations interculturelles.

(AECQ website 2010, Interreligieux)

The AECQ has numerous resources available through its website including podcasts of radio programs and written materials (ibid). The website also posts information about events with an interfaith or intercultural theme (ibid). However, it is important to note that the CRII is not strictly speaking an interfaith organization given that all members of the committee are Roman Catholics (AECQ website 2010).

Montreal boasts four major universities: McGill University (English), *Université de Montréal* (French), Concordia University (English), and *Université du Québec à Montréal* (UQÀM) (French). All have large and active religion departments and celebrated research institutes that promote greater understanding and appreciation of religion as a significant force in historical to contemporary society. There are also several faculty members at each institution that have participated in local interfaith activities whether as invited guests or as sponsors of public talks about negotiating religious diversity. Cooperation between grassroots and scholars occurs most frequently within formal dialogue groups.

McGill Faculty of Religious Studies has, since 1999, hosted summer interfaith seminars for students and religious leaders, although the last one was held in 2010. The participants attend lectures, tour worship sites, share meals and engage in deep discussion about themes that cut across traditions (e.g. food in religion, the significance of hair in religion, authority of sacred texts, etc.). As mentioned in Chapter One, McGill has since 2010 been recognized as a lead university by the Tony Blair Faith Foundation (Tony Blair Faith Foundation 2013).

The *Centre d'étude des religions de l'Université de Montréal* (CÉRUM) has since 2001 sponsored research projects, conferences and public lectures often focused on the theme of negotiating religious diversity in contemporary society. In 2005, the Faculty of Theology embraced religious pluralism by changing the faculty name to *Faculté de théologie et de sciences des religions* and supported the creation of a Canada Research Chair on Islam, Pluralism and Globalization held by Dr. Patrice Brodeur. As an active

member of the Interfaith Youth Corps, Brodeur shares his passion for interfaith with students, faculty, in publications and through his position as a Canada Research Chair.

There are no formal government sponsored interfaith councils aside from support provided through chaplaincy programs within hospitals and corrections services. However the provincial government has broached the subject of reasonable accommodation of religious minorities through the 2008 "Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences" and in 2013 in the lead up to the spring 2014 election the governing Parti Quebecois introduced legislation for a secular charter of values. In both cases, there were no statements issued by interfaith groups.

7.4 Halifax

> The interfaith council knows how to do things, to work together, to reach consensus, to continue without consensus, etc. We don't have to be unanimous on all things. (Interview Halifax)

> The luncheon talks have been the backbone of the interfaith council. We have also written statements against casinos and VLTs; supporting Sunday shopping; expressing concern about the cartoon issue; then about VLTs again. We hosted a special interfaith service for families suffering from VLT fallout. (Interview Halifax)

> Interfaith in Halifax? Not a movement. Enough personal relationships for an available network. Not looking for the next project but know people well enough to get some things done. (Interview Halifax)

> The community is small so there is less opportunity to ghettoize. I bump into Hindus, Muslims and we learn to live with one another. It is small enough for face-to-face encounters. (Interview Halifax)

Halifax offers another distinct portrait of interfaith activity within Canadian urban centres. Although home to a substantially smaller population than the three profiles above – just 356,000 – Halifax is the largest urban centre in the Maritimes. It is also a major port city, home to five universities (St. Mary's, Dalhousie, Mount Saint Vincent, King's College and Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NASCAD)), as well as Canadian Forces Base Halifax one of the largest military bases in Canada. In Halifax, almost 85% of the population is Christian with 47% of the affiliation split amongst Protestant denominations and 37% Catholic (see Table 14). Add to this the 12.6% who claim no religion and there is less than 4% of the population from non-Christian traditions.

Table 14
Religious Populations of Halifax

Selected Religions	2001	% of Pop.	2001	% of Pop.
	CANADA		HALIFAX	
Total population	**29,639,030**	**100.00%**	**355,945**	**100.00%**
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	43.20%	132,025	37.10%
No religion	4,796,325	16.20%	44,695	12.60%
United Church	2,839,125	9.60%	51,010	14.30%
Anglican	2,035,500	6.90%	60,125	16.90%
Christian not elsewhere	780,450	2.60%	4,975	1.40%
Baptist	729,470	2.50%	25,370	7.10%
Lutheran	606,590	2.00%	2,765	0.80%
Muslim	579,640	2.00%	3,070	0.90%
Protestant not elsewhere	549,205	1.90%	5,595	1.60%
Presbyterian	409,830	1.40%	4,935	1.40%
Pentecostal	369,475	1.20%	3,850	1.10%
Jewish	329,995	1.10%	1,575	0.40%
Buddhist	300,345	1.00%	1,480	0.40%
Hindu	297,200	1.00%	960	0.30%
Sikh	278,410	0.90%	175	0.00%
Greek Orthodox	215,175	0.70%	1,675	0.50%
Orthodox not elsewhere	191,465	0.60%	710	0.20%
Jehovah's Witnesses	165,420	0.60%	1,245	0.30%
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	154,750	0.50%	1,160	0.30%
Other Evangelical Christians	126,200	0.40%	2,480	0.70%
Non-denominational	62,880	0.20%	570	0.20%
Aboriginal spirituality	32,720	0.10%	35	0.00%
Pagan	25,730	0.10%	480	0.10%

Source: Statistics Canada. Selected Religions by Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration, 2001 Counts, for Canada, Provinces and Territories - 20% Sample Data
http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/release/release8.cfm

Other trends notable from Table 14 include:

- As with other Canadian urban centres, the Muslim community experienced significant growth in Halifax, more than doubling their numbers between 1991 and 2001, surpassing the Jewish population and thereby becoming the largest non-Christian population in Halifax. However, with real numbers at just over 3,000 the

community is quite small and dedicate most of their volunteer efforts to building the necessary social institutions to serve the needs of the community.

- The Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh communities are also the smallest of the four urban profiles with fewer than 2,600 people altogether.

The dominant Christian profile and small non-Christian population has limited development of interfaith activities in Halifax, with ecumenical or intrafaith relations the more prominent form of dialogue in the city. While there have been some small-scale dialogues amongst select Christian and Jewish clergy, it was out of crisis that the first and only public interfaith organization was formed.

The Interfaith Council of Halifax (ICH) began in response to the need for an interfaith memorial service in the wake of the Swiss Air crash near Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia on September 2, 1998. The local military chaplain asked to organize a memorial service brought together more than ten religious leaders representing the various faith traditions held by victims of the crash – Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Jewish, Mormon, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Baptist, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhism and Unitarian. The group designed a series of memorial service activities that would be respectful of the religious traditions and honour the memories of the victims.

The camaraderie formed by the coming together of faith communities inspired creation of the interfaith council. Since 1998 the group has sponsored several interfaith luncheons, speaker series, and issued several joint statements (against video lottery terminals, against changing the Sunday shopping law, and in support of continuing the opening prayer in the legislature).

However, in 2010, the Interfaith Council of Halifax activities have stalled with the understanding that the members will re-group ad-hoc or whenever a need arises.

While Halifax boasts many post-secondary institutions, only at Dalhousie University is the Chaplaincy program multifaith. Other universities maintain Christian chaplaincy programs reflective of the Christian roots of each institution (i.e. St. Mary's hosts a Roman Catholic Chaplaincy program) (Interviews Halifax). Each university supports either a religious studies or theology programs. At St. Mary's University, between 2005 and 2009, Dr. Paul Bowlby and Dr. Nancy Erhard headed a Heritage Canada research project that examined religious diversity in Halifax (Interview Halifax; St. Mary's University website 2010, Faculty pages).

As with other cities in this study, formal government support of interfaith activities is limited to chaplaincy services at hospitals, corrections services and on the Canadian Forces Base. However, as mentioned above the local government has worked with members of the Halifax Interfaith Council to ensure public memorial services respect the religious diversity of the community.

7.5. Observations about Regional Profiles

The profiles of interfaith work in each Canadian city highlight both similarities and distinctions. Each city has publicly known interfaith activity at the grassroots, scholarly and government levels. However, as distinctions within the above profiles demonstrate, the extent of diversity within the active religious populations of each city has both enhanced and limited the shape, type and range of interfaith work performed.

CHAPTER EIGHT: INTERFAITH PARTICIPANT PROFILES

In Canada where one's religious identity is to be held firmly in one's back pocket only to be taken out for weddings and funerals, interfaith initiatives provide one of the few public forums in which an individual comes to the table with the religious identity card out front. So who is drawn to interfaith work in Canada? While religious leaders and scholars are active participants and organizers of interfaith activities, by and large the membership roster for most interfaith initiatives in Canada is populated by lay practitioners who self-identify with a particular faith. As expected, given the religious landscape, individual members of mainstream-to-liberal Christian organizations dominate Canadian interfaith activities. Christian participants are also by and large seniors who have been active supporters of both ecumenical and interfaith activities for most of their adult life – many for thirty years or more. The increasing age of participants is also evident with individuals from non-Christian traditions, due in part to the changing demographics within their own communities. As non-Christian communities become more established in Canada there are more opportunities to become involved with interfaith initiatives, especially for individuals who have raised their families or are reaching retirement age.

Although effort is made to invite to the dialogue table individuals from all Canadian practising faith traditions, a common complaint raised by interfaith groups is the need for greater representation from non-Christian communities, especially Muslims who seem to be underrepresented given that they constitute the largest non-Christian population in Canada. However, it may literally be a matter of time before this problem is

resolved. For example, the Canadian Muslim community, like many non-Christian communities, has grown rapidly in the closing decades of the twentieth century, with a five-fold increase in the population from 1981 to 2001 (Statistics Canada, 2003b; see Table 1). As with other non-Christian communities, growth has been primarily through immigration. As such, many Canadian Muslims are busy finding work and raising young families. For those with strong ties to their religion, whatever spare time and energy they have is most often directed to the development of the religious institutions that serve their community. For many then, interfaith outreach comes second to the primary needs of providing for one's family and building one's own religious community. This pattern is also evident in other emerging non-Christian religions in Canada namely Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism.

Interfaith initiatives in Canada tend to attract individuals:

- with some level of post-secondary education (many with graduate degrees especially those from non-Christian communities);
- who have traveled extensively (particularly as youth or young adults);
- most were raised either in an interfaith community (most notable among immigrant participants from countries in South Asia and Africa) or had a positive interfaith encounter in their high school or post-secondary schooling.

Although many participants claim their interfaith work to be an important contribution to their spiritual growth, there appears to be little information exchange about interfaith activities amongst interfaith participants and their co-religionists. Several participants even indicated that while some of their co-religionists are interested in the interfaith organizations/activities, as many or more held indifferent to negative views

about participation and the potential outcomes of such efforts. Some interfaith participants were even chastized by their co-religionists for dedicating too much time outside the religious community which is more in need of their volunteer time.

The interfaith movement is voluntaristic in nature, in that for most it is a personal choice to participate. The exception is found within formal dialogue groups who request appointments from specific faith communities (e.g., Ontario Multifaith Council). However, even in these situations most people who participate choose to be the official representative on an interfaith initiative over other potential appointments.

8.1. Profiles of Interfaith Participants in Canada

Individuals are attracted to interfaith activities for a wide range of reasons. Curiosity, personal spiritual quest, to expand one's community, provide others with accurate information about one's tradition, address social justice issues from a faith perspective, solidarity in support of human rights and freedom of religion, desire to exchange/compare/contrast faith-based experience with other religious practitioners, to participate in shared worship of the divine from multiple perspectives. Each has their own motivation and story. Here are a few examples taken from interviews[29] collected.

8.1.1. Ben

In his mid-70s, Ben is Jewish and has been an active participant in interfaith dialogue groups for over 50 years. Ben started his interfaith work in the 1950s as the only Jewish parent on the parent association at a local public school. In that role he worked

[29] To ensure the anonymity of interviewees in these portraits, the city has not been included in the reference.

with the parent committee and school principal to invite a Rabbi to the school for an information session with teachers and parents. The Rabbi brought with him the Torah scrolls and explained the ritual calendar before fielding questions from the audience. The success of this event encouraged Ben to continue his efforts to "break barriers and build bridges with other religious people" (Interview). As such, Ben became an active member of the Christian – Jewish dialogue group. In the late 1970s he then joined a chapter of the World Conference of Religion and Peace (WCRP) and in the early 1980s was asked to joined a multifaith group. Ben explained that his years of interfaith work have allowed him to build an important community of friends. Ben described his interest in interfaith work as a "self-desire to learn more about others – their culture, religion and practices" (Interview).

Ben was raised in a conservative Jewish home that followed dietary laws and participated in annual rituals but he didn't attend synagogue regularly. As an adult, he readily admits that he has not always observed Sabbath, but he has become an active member at his synagogue. When asked about sharing his interfaith work with his Jewish friends, Ben admitted that the response runs from indifference to scolding. He has been chastised for wasting his time and told that "if you have extra time it should be spent working for the synagogue not interfaith" (ibid). This reaction is disappointing to Ben. Although he does not push his interfaith work, he has explained to many of his Jewish friends that his interfaith experiences have allowed him to meet many good and wonderful people and he now has a circle of friends that includes several individuals from diverse religious backgrounds.

Reflecting on developments within the interfaith movement, Ben explained that when he started interfaith work in the 1950s religious discrimination was a regular part of everyday life. As an example he recalled walking daily by a hotel that had a sign in the front window that read 'no dogs or Jews allowed'. Ben remarked that fortunately attitudes have changed significantly from that time. As he explained,

> The globe has become a single community. Interrelationships have changed. There are more and more interfaith marriages and inter-racial marriages. Fifty years ago that was condemned. Now it is more accepted. We now live next to each other. We get to see how others live, to learn their customs and to see how much we share. (Interview)

Although Ben sees himself not a salesperson for the interfaith movement, he is committed to interfaith work. Despite the lack of headlines, Ben sees interfaith work as important civic duty in that interfaith groups offer positive examples of religious people working together in a positive way.

8.1.2. Michael

Michael is in his mid-50s and is a born-again evangelical Christian active in his community. In 2001 his community appointed him as its representative to a government sponsored interfaith advisory council. His motivation for interfaith work is limited to ensuring that all religious people are afforded reasonable access to their human rights for freedom of religious expression and practice. While he appreciates and respects the other committee members as people of faith, his personal religious convictions forbid him from engaging in any shared worship activities. As such Michael considers them to be more associates than friends.

8.1.3. Mary

Mary is in her mid-30s and described her journey to interfaith work as a lapsed Roman Catholic come spiritual seeker who saw within interfaith activities, a safe space where she could explore spirituality across religious traditions.

The path to interfaith work was only taken up in university. Mary described her religious upbringing as conservative. Although she attended church with her family they were not involved in the Church. In university she had a desire to be of service to the larger community and became more interested in social justice issues. She also met her first non-Christian – a Jewish student who was also involved in social justice work on campus and continues to be an important friend. As her social justice activity increased so did her criticism of the Roman Catholic Church and its teachings against homosexuality, abortion, and emphasis on a male hierarchy with no room for women in leadership.

The critique pushed her to seek alternative spiritual paths. She studied Paganism and read many New Age texts including *Conversations with God* and *Power of Now* and several books by Starhawk. Mary saw within these teachings many parallels with Buddhist teachings and practices which lead her to search for a Buddhist meditation group in the city.

This led to her involvement with an interfaith group that had a dream of building and centre where people of all faiths could come together and worship the divine / sacred together. Mary saw the interfaith centre as an important project for the "many, many people who identify as being spiritual and who are looking for a welcoming community" (Interview). Mary became a key member of the group working to build community

support for the project, including a program of meditation retreats open to people of all faiths.

A critical point in her path occurred on one of those meditation retreats at which the Dali Lama made a brief visit. In his teaching, the Dali Lama urged attendees not to abandon the faith they were born to, but to instead search more deeply within it for direction on how to bring into daily practice compassion for others. Mary was unsure if she could get past her criticism of the Roman Catholic Church to find that connection, but she was willing to try. She started to attend Church more regularly and read more about the history of social justice work by the Catholic Church. Fairly quickly she realized that she was not alone in wanting changes in the Church. She found a number of active groups that were working on initiatives for greater acceptance of homosexuality, women's leadership, pro-choice, etc. The more she learned the more she wanted to be a part of this transformation. This led to a reaffirmation of her faith and a commitment to the Church. She also became more involved in Church activities.

Mary still values the dream of an interfaith centre, but has withdrawn her active involvement so she can dedicate more time to her Church work.

As her participation in interfaith activities waned, Mary reflected on her interfaith work. She acknowledges gratitude for the opportunity to connect with the interfaith community. Without a tradition to call her own, the interfaith group was her community. However, with some distance she has recognized some key shortcomings within the interfaith movement. For example, at the interfaith retreats she was struck by the absence of mainline Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, particularly Roman Catholics. As Mary explained,

> For interfaith to work, at some point these initiatives need to hit a critical mass. To go forward there is a need to build the political will and to raise money, to attract a broad spectrum of volunteers for legitimacy and credibility. We need to access the majority of the population. When you live globally you need Roman Catholics to be involved. (Interview)

8.1.4. Gerald

Gerald is a retired Anglican Priest who describes himself as "post-denominational" and most often on the margins of his tradition (Interview). As a teenager, Gerald became aware of other faiths which led him to question statements like 'Christianity is the only path' (ibid). In university, he pursued theological studies but was struck by a curriculum that did not include any information about other faith traditions. To rectify the situation, Gerald took it upon himself to organize visits to the local synagogue. Once ordained, he became an active leader and participant in a range of social justice work as a means to live out his Christian values. Initially his work focused on Christian ecumenical organizations including Project Ploughshares and Kairos. Since the 1970s he has also been active in various interfaith groups including local chapters of WCRP, URI, and WIFEA.

Reflecting on developments within interfaith work he both celebrates the progress made and sees several challenges that need to be addressed for the movement to go to the next level. Interfaith work has attracted a committed core of people. This has resulted not only in a strong network of people across religious traditions, but the development of deep-seated friendships. However, he notes that too often it is the same people involved in interfaith work. For example, many members of the WCRP group are also members of URI and WIFEA. Gerald also sees benefit in the various public panel discussions that

have occurred over the years as important opportunities to share information about diverse religious beliefs and practices with a larger audience. Usually the panels include religious leaders, often male, who share the religious teachings on a particular subject – for example the ritual calendar or daily devotions. However, Gerald also notes that these events have become repetitive and it is time to "get beyond discussions about why one removes shoes when entering a sacred space or the etiquette of attending a marriage ceremony" (Interview).

Gerald offered two recommendations here. First, interfaith groups need to become more action oriented, "to work together on social justice issues in response to the current needs within the larger community" (ibid). And second, interfaith groups need to take more risks in dialogue, "to get beyond platitudes and raise questions about exclusivist directives that are also found within religious teachings" (ibid).

One final reflection Gerald offered was the need for interfaith participants to engage more fully in intrafaith dialogue, to share their interfaith experiences with co-religionists to promote alternative approaches to the religious other.

8.1.5. Steven

Steven is a second generation Buddhist born in Canada, in his late 20s who is an active member of a Buddhist youth group. For Steven, interfaith activities provide an opportunity for people who are not part of a specific religious community to learn more about other religious traditions, and even one's own heritage tradition, but without the threat of conversion. Steven came to interfaith work as part of his own commitment to building an environmental awareness campaign with his Buddhist youth group. He

'stumbled upon' an interfaith group involved with a program to promote greening places of worship and joined their faith and environment committee and then the board of directors. Steven saw this connection as a natural extension of his work with the environmental awareness campaign and a chance to bridge the gap between faith communities. "Sustainable activity is not just an environmental issue. There is a community building aspect to it. It can strengthen the community and build links between communities" (Interview). As an active member of interfaith he was asked to be a participant for a round table session on "Spirituality and Sustainability". Of the experience, Steven remarked that he was inspired by the opportunity and,

> … it felt an openness at the table that I had not felt before. It felt like a genuine dialogue. Within the faith context it was open and refreshing. Even the events surrounding it deepened my belief that people have the potential to do something meaningful. If more people had those kinds of experiences, things would be different.
>
> (interview)

This reflection was an important moment for Steven who in his university life had experienced less positive interfaith encounters. He recalled his participation in an interfaith forum during university in which he was the Buddhist student alongside Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, and Sufi students. In that case the questions posed to panelists where quite political centering on the interpretation of peace within religious traditions. Most panelists held defensive positions which ruined the experience for him. Another experience occurred when he hosted an information table for a Buddhist student group he was involved with. A Christian student (Roman Catholic), approached the table and started to debate the misconceived merits of Buddhist beliefs with Steven. The student presented the Roman Catholic faith as the true faith and encouraged Steven to convert.

Instead of converting, Steven saw the experience as one that seemed to be of more benefit to the individual proselytizing than to the potential convert. In fact, the unspoken edict against proselytization is one of the key reasons Steven supports interfaith activities, because within the interfaith context "promotion of faith is almost beside the point" (ibid). Steven sees this edict as particularly important for youth who are not part of a specific religious community but want to have the opportunity to learn about other religious traditions and practices without the threat of conversion.

For Steven, interfaith work has allowed him to better understand how to apply daily the Buddhist teaching that all life is interconnected. As he explained, "because I know the tenants of my practice, interfaith work has become a natural extension – it empowers me and creates value through building connections and building community with others. These connections are there to help you become a better person" (ibid).

8.1.6. Christina

Christina is a university student enrolled in a Masters in Divinity program, who is interested in building bridges and sees interfaith work as key to that endeavour. Christina wants to go beyond the traditional formal interfaith dialogue activity to a more hands-on approach that is focused more on social action based activities. As an active youth minister in the United Church she sees this route as the best way to get more youth involved in interfaith work, "youth want action" (Interview). As she explained,

> Younger people take multiculturalism as a given. But that is not always the case for the older members of the congregation. When I talk about interfaith within the church context it is treated like it is my pet project, a question for my generation to deal with. While there seems to be interest there are very few of the old guard engaged. There is a real sense of being alienated by the institution

> and it is going to take twenty years before we will be able to get anything done. Hopefully those interested today will still be active in the church.
>
> (Interviews)

8.1.7. Rahul

Rahul is a Hindu male in his mid-60s who immigrated to Canada in the 1970s. In the mid-1970s he was invited by a Catholic Priest to join a circle to discuss strategies for responding to racism within the city; racism directed to both ethnic and religious identities. Over the years the group sponsored several talks, annual interfaith dinners, and religious site visits. Since the early days of the group Rahul has noticed a significant shift in public attitudes with racist incidents becoming less of a problem. As he explained, "diversity is more normal" (Interview). As well, in recent years there has been an increase of the population his temple serves which demands more of his time, leaving less time for interfaith work. He is hopeful that someone from the next generation will chose to be involved, but at the time of the interview no one from the community was interested in taking up the call (ibid).

8.1.8. Trevor

Trevor is a Mormon but even he claims to be "not a typical Mormon" (Interview). Trevor is in his late 20s and likes to think outside the box. His faith is firm in that he is committed to the Church of the Latter Day Saints (LDS) and dedicates many hours as an elder in his church, often attending church activities three to five times each week. And yet he also finds time to participate in interfaith work because he sees it as inspiring to work for the greater good with co-religionists. He even promotes his interfaith work

within his LDS Church, with mixed response. For example Trevor had petitioned his church for contributions to support an interfaith program which provides various services for the homeless. In this case the LDS community collected a dozen bags of clothing for men, sorted everything and also participated in the distribution. Another time Trevor asked the congregation to assist with activities related to an international interfaith meeting. He argued that the LDS community is very good at organizing activities and as such they would be a significant asset to ensure the registration process would run smoothly. He secured the support of ten men who were not completely convinced of the merit of the project but nonetheless fulfilled the need and rotated shifts at the registration table throughout the three-day event. He also tried to get the community to back the building of an interfaith centre, but because the centre had already made a clear public statement that it would be open to performing gay marriage ceremonies, the LDS community would not sign on. Trevor continues to support the interfaith centre project but as an individual person of faith.

Trevor acknowledged that the LDS takes up so much time given the weekly church activities, and with three young children there is little time left for interfaith work. But he continues. For Trevor, service to the larger community is the first step. He is convinced that in most cities there is an indifference to religion that is too often supported by inaccurate stereotypes. As an example he described his first interfaith meeting as a jaw-dropping event. People at the table asked him "Why are you here? Why do you care?" (Interview). For Trevor, interfaith is important because it provides an opportunity to educate others about his beliefs and to learn more about the beliefs of others. Interfaith allows the opportunity for educating Mormons about other world religions and for

educating the world about Mormons and the LDS Church. Trevor sees this as important because for him, ignorance leads to discrimination and discrimination leads to injustice and inequitable relations among people. It was during his mission experience that he learned how to interact with diverse people and how to love people for their diversity, "to shed off my own tendencies toward discrimination and racism" (ibid). For Trevor this was a 180 degree turn with regards to his pre-conceived sentiment towards other religious people. In his opinion, Trevor sees a similar shift in many younger Mormons who he describes as being a lot more open in general. This is good news for him as he sees the need for intra-dialogue within the LDS church so that the liberals of today can be better integrated into the church of tomorrow.

Trevor also sees interfaith as an opportunity to address a serious societal issue - the almost complete lack of interest in religion that has left the new generation struggling a lot. As he explained,

> I hope the interfaith centre will offer to youth an opportunity to see the good things that religion offers to life. Everything that is good in my life comes from religion. Within a society where religion is absent the overarching attitude tends to focus on 'me, me, me', yet the whole purpose of religion is not about oneself but about others. That is why I seek. Faith has encouraged me to be open, to seek after that which is good. Good is from God. (Interview)

Another key motivation for Trevor to participate in interfaith work is to be part of a community of religious people who would collectively respond to acts of religious discrimination. He argues that religion is too often its own worst enemy because too many religious people are intolerant. In his own experience he is aware of a Mormon friend who tried to enrol his son into a private Christian school. The enrollment process was going well until the parent was asked which Christian community the family

belonged to. When he indicated the family were practising members of the local LDS church, the school denied admission to the child.

In cases like this, Trevor sees the interfaith community as a collective community that will protect a lot of people from harm. Interreligious organizations are key to protecting the individual right to freedom of religion by mediating situations whether within religious communities themselves or in the larger society. This is important as we go forward for as Trevor sees it, "if you don't know someone persecuted because of religion you will soon" (Interview).

When asked about how interfaith work has informed his faith, Trevor enthusiastically claimed that "interfaith involvement has added to my faith 100%. If not I would be a Mormon who is only a Mormon. Now I am a Mormon who also understands Jews, Assembly of God Christians, Buddhists and Sikhs, better! Interfaith has also provided me with the opportunity to serve others, not just Mormons or other Christians" (Interview).

8.2. Reflections on the Purpose of Interfaith

As the above portraits suggest, the path towards interfaith work is varied. However, the views of Canadian interfaith organization participants align with many key themes also found within the global interfaith movement including the realization of personal to social benefits, and shared views on the challenges and concerns for the future of the interfaith movement, albeit with slight variations specific the Canadian context.

Personal motivations to participate are often tied to the perceived purpose of interfaith work. Common themes expressed by interviewees include claims that interfaith 'helped me to become a better person' (Interview). A few claimed that interfaith exchanges allowed them to recognize how much they appreciate their own traditions, "bumps and all" (Interviews). More specifically, several claim that interfaith work forces them to dig deep into their own traditions to find direction for negotiating diversity in a respectful way. As one interviewee claimed, "interfaith helps a so-so Christian become a good one" (Interview Edmonton). Others see interfaith work as a humbling experience.

> Many non-Christians have more knowledge about their religious tradition and about other religious traditions including Christianity. I need to approach dialogue with humility. I don't have all the answers. They have answers too that are as valuable as mine. This approach affects my interpretation of scripture dramatically. (Interview Halifax)

Several made claims that interfaith work has provided them with an important reminder that God is not limited. As one said, "God dwells out and beyond as well as deep and within. Interfaith has deepened, widened, heightened, expanded and affirmed my faith" (Interview Vancouver). Interfaith work has also provided an important opportunity to build personal relationships as one interviewee remarked, "conversations and *real* friendships become that meaningful baseline from which interfaith understanding grows and becomes deeper, richer, and all those adjectives that are very positive" (Interview Montreal, emphasis by interviewee).

While personal growth is recognized as an important by-product of interfaith work, others aim to fulfill a greater purpose. For many, the conscious engaged effort to celebrate religious diversity contributes to changing public attitudes about religion in

society. Interfaith organizations offer the larger community a positive example of religious people who work cooperatively to not only bridge differences across communities but also respond to a range of social issues. Several interviewees identified dialogue groups in particular as important opportunities for deep learning about the religious other, to both respond to our curiosity and to dismantle stereotypes (Interviews Montreal, Calgary, Vancouver). As one interviewee explained,

> When we meet with one another we dispel stereotypes, offer space for dialogue, become human beings. We can see commonalities. Interfaith makes you more hybrid. People in interfaith are like nodes that connect to and create the larger groups. These groups offer strategies for how to deal with difference.
> (Interview Calgary)

A few even see interfaith work as a way to revive Christian communities in Canada. On several occasions Christian interviewees claimed that interfaith could be the "leaven in the loaf", by providing a purpose for congregations to reach out to the larger community (Interviews Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Victoria). Others push the point further by not only declaring interfaith work as needed in the world, but that it is a religious duty which transcends the boundaries of all religions, a call to "respond to the ills of globalization" and "preach the gospel of interfaith" (Interviews Calgary and Victoria).

> We can no longer tolerate ignorance. There are enough canaries falling. The world will go up in smoke if voices of paranoia dominate our society. We need people who have a vision. Interfaith offers a counterpoint. We challenge people of faith to see another perspective in your faith journey. Unless we do something we are all in trouble. (Interview Vancouver)

However, the call to action is not without its challenges.

> Interfaith is a new field, and we don't know where it is going. We are the pioneers. Many questions we don't even know yet. But we are living the multifaith reality every day and must learn to respond to practical questions in the midst of it. (Interview Toronto)

8.3. Reflections on the Challenges of Interfaith Work in Canada

Participants from Canadian interfaith organizations recognize many of the same challenges also present within the global interfaith movement including organizational issues related to equitable representation of religions/gender/marginal voices, attracting more participants – especially youth, taking more risks in dialogues and programming, and growing the movement by building stronger lines of communication amongst existing programs and reaching out to integrate more conservative and secular voices into the conversation. However, there are differing opinions on how to address these challenges.

8.3.1 Equitable Representation

The question of achieving and/or maintaining equitable representation depends on the structure of the interfaith organization. For the more formal representative groups there is almost always good representation of Christian and Jewish participants given that most are appointed by their respective communities; Christians appointed by their congregations or regional authorities and Jewish participants most often appointed by the regional chapter of the Canadian Jewish Congress. There has also been attention by

Christian communities to appoint more female representatives. However, an on-going challenge for many interfaith organizations is to attract participants from other religious communities.

Several identified increasing demands on time as a major deterrent, "with so many demands on my time by my own religious community, there is not much left over for interfaith" (Interview Vancouver). Others recognize that a crisis within the community has also been a problem. For example, in Vancouver, Sikh participation was very high in several interfaith organizations in the 1970s and 1980s as a means to both educate people about Sikhism and to promote the positive contributions Sikhs bring to society. This changed with the 1996 conflict over use of chairs and tables for the langar in the Ross Street Gurdwara creating significant tension and even violence that split the community (Interviews Vancouver). As one participant explained, "the issue took considerable energy from everyone and it is only recently that I feel I have time to extend my work beyond the community" (Interview Vancouver).

Similar responses were offered when asked about the noticeable absence of First Nations people from interfaith organizations. Several noted that although invitations have been offered, many First Nations communities are more focused on internal social issues, negotiating treaty issues and residential school responses with governments. Members of the Montreal Interfaith Council recalled participation of members from the Mohawk community who have not returned to the group since the Oka crisis of 1990. A few participants suggested that since most First Nations hold Christian identities it was not necessary to extend separate invitations as there are already enough Christians at the table (Interviews Halifax, Toronto, Vancouver). One interviewee, who had participated in the

2006 United Nations Habitat round table on religion and spirituality, just shook his head when asked and sighed, “First Nations are missing from the real discourse. They are mostly invited for entertainment purposes only” (Interview Vancouver).

When questioned about the lack of representatives from Pagan, new religious movements or individuals who identify as ‘spiritual but not religious’, the reaction was surprising. A few mentioned that it was difficult to outreach to everyone and that they instead relied on individuals to join voluntarily. Others dismissed these groups as not meeting the 150-year rule of establishment of a religious tradition, a rule that was described not as exclusionary but as a means to ensure all participants are grounded in a solid recognized religious tradition. Others claimed that such minority groups were either represented vicariously through another group, “Pagans were represented by the Unitarian Church” (Interview), or they were just not as important at the table. As one interviewee explained, “if Roman Catholics are not at the table there is a problem. But if smaller groups, sects, or cults are not there, it is not a problem” (Interview).

8.2.2. Attracting Youth

Several participants also identified the significant challenge of attracting youth to become members of organizing committees. A few acknowledge that part of the problem is due to shifts in the demographics of religious communities themselves, a shift that has led to diminished commitment of youth to activities sponsored by their own religious communities, let alone interfaith activities. Others acknowledge that while many youth

are not interested in committing to a specific religious tradition they are clearly looking for a path that also supports their spiritual concerns. As one interviewee explained,

> There was more interfaith activity in the 1980s than now. It is as if people are just tired out. At the 1980s peace movement rallies against the cold war there would be crowds of more than 100,000. Today, youth may be involved in all sorts of protests but not from a religious perspective. (Interview Vancouver)

In the same vein, one interviewee suggested that those involved in the first wave of interfaith (over the 1970s and 1980s), were really testing the waters, the first to meet and get to know individuals from diverse religious communities. As he explained,

> They were very active participating in a range of interfaith initiatives - VMAS, PICA, WCRP, WIFEA, URI. But they were the same people just wearing different hats. Now that it is time for the second generation to become involved they are less interested. They already feel that diversity is normative. (Interview Vancouver)

This opinion was shared by many across the country. While some interfaith organizations sponsor projects that outreach to youth in primary and secondary schools, participants claim they have had trouble encouraging youth from their own communities to participate. The exception seems to be those organizations engaged in activities beyond dialogue. For example, the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society has attracted several young adults (25 to 35 years) to their board of directors mostly because of the VMAS agenda which addresses a range of activities from hosting traditional dialogue activities of religious sites visits and panels, producing the Multifaith Calendar, the forward thinking 'Greening Sacred Spaces" program, sponsoring interfaith music festivals, to hosting panels on social issues that impact low-income families in

Vancouver. The diverse actions attract a wider audience and appeal to what Eboo Patel identified as a call from youth for engaged participation activities (Patel 2006). As one interviewee explained,

> …young adults have a profound understanding of religious diversity. They have been raised on diversity and are not interested in attending information sessions. They want to engage with other religious people through activities that speak to larger social and global issues. (Interview Toronto)

Young adults involved in Canadian interfaith work have also expressed a desire to take more risks with their interfaith work. However, youth are not the only ones interested in taking more risks.

8.3.3. Taking More Risks

Across the interview pool there were complaints that interfaith work is too often focused on preaching to the converted. There is a need to expand both the audience and the content. Many expressed a desire to push interfaith conversation beyond discussions of what is held in common to issues of difference that have too often been sources of conflict between religious communities. The following represent a few samples of this sentiment:

> I am looking for quality not quantity. Interfaith is about encountering and relationships building. Too often we are too afraid of offending others that we water it down. [Interfaith] needs to have some depth. So many interfaith encounters only ever cover the basics. Rarely do we deal with the difficulties, ask the tough questions or deal more deeply. Sometimes we just have to take risks. But there is a fine line between risk and offence. … People are afraid of religion. (Interview Montreal)

> Too often interfaith becomes just a meeting of people tossing platitudes with no real conviction to address conflicts or oppressive qualities found in all faith communities. … I believe in the movement but don't want to just play the politically correct issues. Too often interfaith participants don't really listen or work together. I want interfaith to go to a deeper level. I want to get past the "safe" conversations to recognize the various forms of exclusion that continue to exist within religious traditions and amongst religious traditions.
>
> (Interview Vancouver)

> Too often interfaith gatherings are all about agreeing on platitudes and similarities. People present their religion in a positive perspective. Sometimes people don't want to test that need too fully. I have a desire to go deeper.
>
> (Interview Halifax)

> It is too easy to stay with platitudes. We do not want to deal with the hard stuff. Interfaith is just another movement that is superficial for 90% of the time. There is not enough bridge work. We are always reinventing the wheel due to a lack of communication between groups. The more involved I am, the less confident I am.
>
> (Interview Montreal)

> … I went to the World's Parliament of Religion in Barcelona. No need to go again or need to go to other large interfaith meetings. The meeting was a bit of a mystery. I was not impressed by the content. I had already seen so much of what was said – there was nothing new. We need a real agenda to promote.
>
> (Interview Toronto)

However not everyone agrees with taking such risks. Some clearly celebrate the work of interfaith organizations as providing an alternative model for bridging conflicting views. They see the focus on commonalities not only as a positive approach but appropriate for growing the movement, especially in efforts to reach out to more conservative religious communities. Again, a few examples:

> There are some bridges that cannot be crossed by some. For example, acceptance of homosexuality is not possible for many people of faith. (Interview Montreal)

> We need to avoid going too left, to avoid taking positions on conflicts in the Middle East, gay marriage, or poverty. (Interview Halifax)

> Through small steps we can break the ices of hatred … small steps are crucial. Small steps but ripple effect. (Interview Montreal)

> Focus on common ground. Try to understand difference in a respectful manner. (Interview Halifax)

> Each religion is a tool to realize one's spiritual potential. Compassion is a common ground from where we can work together. Knowing is not enough – we need to take this to others. (Interview Vancouver)

8.3.4. Promoting Intrafaith

Alongside the call for expanding outreach beyond the converted, was the call for more intrafaith dialogue.

> There is a cleavage in many traditional religious communities where one side is generally heading more towards the fundamentalist side of the spectrum and the other towards a more worldly cosmopolitan perspective. (Interview Vancouver)

As with responses to calls for more risk taking, the reaction to intrafaith dialogue was mixed. While many identified the need to curb the more exclusive views that are often held and expressed by conservatives in any tradition, as many (and sometimes the same interviewees), remarked how they rarely shared their own interfaith experiences with others from their own communities. The lack of sharing rather seemed more the norm than the exception. Some, like Ben's portrait above, found most co-religionists to be disinterested or even concerned about time spent outside the community. Others described themselves as being on the margins of their own communities so there are few with whom they want to share. A few explained that while they regularly invite their communities to interfaith activities only a few acknowledge the invitation and even fewer

attend; “interfaith is just not a priority” (Interview Calgary). The exception seems to be events focused on selections of sacred music from across traditions, events that regularly draw large groups. Tours of religious sites also bring new people to interfaith work with curiosity about the religious other being a key motivator for attending, however it is unclear how many attendees continue with interfaith work after the visit.

In one case, a member of the local interfaith council described an intrafaith intervention that resulted in a significant change to an exclusive view. As a Baptist, he was aware of a pending visit to the city by an evangelical speaker who often included insults of Muslims in the sermons. As the interviewee explains, “I asked him what does ‘dissing’ Muslims say about Christians?” (Interview). The intervention resulted in the removal of insults directed toward Muslims from the program, at least for that city.

However, while there is an expressed desire to promote intrafaith dialogue, it seems that in Canada, the tools and resources on offer by interfaith organizations are currently too limited to support this endeavour. With some attention and creativity, and a few more material resources, tools employed by interfaith organizations to bridge diversity and find common ground could be adapted and used to facilitate more effective intrafaith dialogue. As one interviewee explained, “all faiths have the same issues, and nobody fights like a family!” (Interview Vancouver).

8.3.5. Communication and Network Building

In Canada, there are interfaith organizations from coast to coast that include chapters from international organizations (WCRP, CCJ, URI), to local grassroots groups. The organizations tend to cluster in large urban centers with many participants joining multiple groups. This is particularly the case for individuals who also belong to ecumenical and social justice organizations. Such is a common attribute recognized in social movement theory whereby, the core group of organizers tend to be made up of individuals who are engaged "in multiple movements with compatible ideologies" (Staggenborg 2007, 37).

When discussing Canadian interfaith organizations, many interviewees claimed to be either involved with or know someone associated with efforts in each of the main urban centers of Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver and Victoria. Although there were clear connections between various interfaith organizations, there has been limited communication or sharing of resources. In 2005 there was an effort to establish a Canadian national interfaith council. However, it fizzled out after a few conference call meetings in part due to many of the invitees claiming to be over-extended in their other interfaith commitments to dedicate more time to the development of the network (Interviews Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

Although a national interfaith network has not as yet been realized, several Canadian interfaith organizations are registered members of the North American Interfaith Network (NAIN), including the Vancouver Multifaith Action Society, InterSpiritual Centre Vancouver, Victoria Interfaith Council, Edmonton Interfaith Centre

for Education and Action, Multifaith Saskatchewan, and the Scarboro Foreign Mission Society (NAIN website 2013, Members page). NAIN sponsors an annual meeting and provides members with access to online information about various interfaith events and resources in North America. In 2013 they held their 25th anniversary meeting in Toronto and the 2015 meeting will be held in Regina, Saskatchewan (NAIN website 2013, Connect page). Although there is a Canadian presence within the NAIN structure, Canadian participation at annual meetings is limited and not representative of the range of interfaith organizations across Canada.

There also seems to be a disconnect between Canadian interfaith grassroots organizations and formal academic programs. Many interviewees acknowledged that they often call upon Canadian scholars of religion to participate as guest speakers at various interfaith events. However, on several occasions interviewees complained about the disinterest of scholars to accept invitations. There were also those who noted that the emphasis on professional communication (using language that is perhaps too technical or relying on concepts that are not always readily accessible to the general public), has at times been an obstacle in the ability or desire for the grassroots interfaith organizers to request religious studies scholars. Some remarked that they would no longer approach scholars because in past experiences scholars "lectured" the audience in a manner that was not readily accessible or inspiring to the average participant. There were also several who complained that scholars didn't know when to stop talking (Interviews Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver).

Alternatively, several religious studies scholars suggested that they and their colleagues can be important resources for interfaith organizations, especially those

engaged in dialogue efforts. As one interviewee offered, "academics bring in breathing room, and layers and layers of contradiction" (Interview Montreal). Several scholars and lay-person participants acknowledge a need for religious studies scholars to be more engaged with policy makers, interdisciplinary studies and publications that appeal to the general public, to provide education about religion and defend religious diversity. Scholars of religion have also been identified as being particularly important for highlighting the positive contributions religion and religious social movements offer to civil society including a focus on charity, compassion, volunteering, and social capital building (Williams 2003; Kniss and Burns 2004; Bramadat 2009).

An important bridge between the university community and grassroots organizations has sometimes been found through the on-campus chaplaincy programs. Interfaith organizations which team with chaplaincy programs can sometimes access important resources including space to host events. Most universities have chapel spaces, many of which have also been transformed to accommodate multifaith celebrations with some more successful than others. As one chapel manager explained,

> … the multifaith chapel provides space for students and faculty. The space is not perfect. Everyone is inconvenienced by the chapel, but all are equally unhappy. That said, there continues to be lots of respect and desire to find solutions.
>
> (Interview Victoria)

Another clear disconnect in communication amongst interfaith organizations and participants can be found in government agencies who work with interfaith committees including the military, corrections services, healthcare, and government sponsored councils. Rarely do these committees include representatives from existing interfaith

organizations. Instead the preference is to solicit members from distinct religious communities with the occasional religious studies scholar.

8.4. Reflections on the Influence of the Canadian Multicultural Act

In 1988 the Canadian Multiculturalism Act was passed. Given the aims of the act to both preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of all Canadians and to celebrate diversity (Canadian Multiculturalism Act 1988), interviewees were asked how the Multiculturalism Act has impacted their interfaith work. The responses were mixed.

From the positive side of the spectrum there are those who see the Multiculturalism Act as an important policy tool which promotes respectful engagement across cultural and religious communities. A few quote by proponents include:

> Canada's multiculturalism allows interfaith to work. The national identity is still being formed. Canada is a place for many to start again, an opportunity to extend hands across boundaries, one of God's great experiments – can they live together in harmony with each other and the earth. Bridge building must be done in peace. (Interview Vancouver)

> Multiculturalism is very important. It will grow from Canada all over the world. Every religion has to know and respect each other before we can have peace. We live on this planet with different skin, religion, language and culture. We need to know more about each other's religions and cultures. It is the only way. (Interview Montreal)

> In Tibet, faith communities did not mix. In Canada there is a much better understanding of faith – freedom of religion is promoted by the government. In Canadian society you are expected to be neighbourly. (Interview Calgary)

There are sceptics though who are concerned that the Multicultural Act is only the beginning with much work required by the federal government and Canadians at large to

both acknowledge the contribution of religious communities in general and interfaith work in particular.

> There is a hope that this idea of a multinational heritage actually will come true. It is not always so that the reality fits the myth. It is easier to recognize the other when there is more diversity. However, there is always a risk of polarization. We cannot take multiculturalism for granted. (Interview Montreal)

> Multiculturalism is very positive for communities. But the government needs to be more involved to meet the diverse communities where they are. (Interview Montreal)

> Multiculturalism promotes tolerance only. The word should be changed to acceptance. Interfaith is way beyond tolerance. Tolerance is the last refuge of the uncommitted. (Interview Halifax)

A few took their criticism further:

> Multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s helped, but not so much now. There are too many restrictions and no aid or assistance for religious communities. (Interview Montreal)

> The Multiculturalism Act does nothing for promoting interfaith activities. The way and means to negotiate diversity is not discussed in policy or programs. (Interview Vancouver)

8.5. Reflections on the State and Future of the Interfaith Movement in Canada

Each interview closed with reflections on the current state and hopes for the future of interfaith work in Canada. As expected, most responses were optimistic. A few reiterated their concerns that exchanges need to be both broadened and deepened, and that more people from diverse backgrounds need to be included in the conversation. These were the exceptions. Despite the challenges outlined above, most expressed a genuine pride in the work accomplished to date and see a clear role for interfaith work to

provide the tools necessary to continue building bridges between religious individuals and communities across Canada and beyond. There is a firm commitment to the community and its capacity to bridge diversity. Many see interfaith work as giving people something they can't get anywhere else.

> Interfaith is cutting edge stuff. We need to understand each other. It's hard work but satisfying work when it works. I so believe in it and I am glad to be in a situation where I could live this out. (Interview Montreal)

> There are levels and layers to interfaith. Contemplative perspectives, shared worship, silent meditation, chanting. All reach out beyond the intellectual and traditional boundaries. (Interview Vancouver)

> Interfaith allows us to move beyond ideas to action; to share more stories with more people; to question one another and provoke; to provoke and push the conversation further; to discuss triumphs and best practices and to share thoughts on the future. (Interview Halifax)

Many also recognized that the movement is small and will need additional resources – people, spaces, and financial support – to grow and serve the needs.

> There are lots of interfaith pockets, a number of seeds have been planted and germinated but not full grown. There is lots of opportunity to work collectively on growing this movement. However, all of the seeds will not blossom in my lifetime. Some won't grow at all and some will take another 30-40 years, but there are a lot of little things happening. (Interview Vancouver)

> The Canadian interfaith movement could be bigger but is not somehow... The next step is to hire a director and secretarial support. The movement needs to be more organized. We have reached the limits of small group capacity to promote interfaith widely. Now we need a grant to contract someone to help manage the demand. We need to be more proactive. (Interview Halifax)

CHAPTER NINE: OBSERVATIONS AND FUTURE STUDY

There is much food for thought for those interested in studying the interfaith movement. Within the Canadian context, the development of interfaith work has followed similar yet distinct paths which reflect the unique religious populations and social concerns found within each urban centre. Many of the characteristic traits and themes identified through the primary fieldwork research of Canadian interfaith participants are also reflected within the global interfaith movement, affirming important markers for tracking developments within this field of study. There are shared patterns in the historical development of the movement, range of religious voices involved, motivations for participation, types of institutional frameworks, influence of interfaith work on individual religiosity and relations with co-religionists, as well as shared concerns and hopes for the future of the movement. However, within the primary data were some challenges identified that were not explicitly discussed within the global context, and some issues not addressed in either data set. Such omissions point to areas in need of more attention by both participants and scholars.

9.1. Shared Patterns within the Canadian and Global Interfaith Movement

The Canadian interfaith movement shares much also found in the global context. There is a similar history, albeit on a smaller scale in Canada. There is a common set of motivators for participation. Celebration of religious diversity and shared humanity are key elements, as is the desire to bridge difference, dispel stereotypes, correct

misinformation and curb religious illiteracy. Many see their interfaith work as following a religious duty to foster peace and fulfill charitable and social justice obligations. Canadians involved in interfaith work experience many of the same benefits as their counterparts in other nations, in particular, experiences of personal spiritual growth and bonding friendships. Overall, Canadians active in interfaith organizations share the optimism expressed by their global counterparts that the work of building positive interfaith relations is becoming a more mainstream social attitude.

Likewise, the Canadian interfaith movement has grown exponentially over the closing decades of the twentieth century and reflects the institutional diversity found within the global context. There are many active interfaith initiatives including connections with large international interfaith organizations, formal to informal dialogue and trialogue groups, through to small independent multifaith grassroots groups. There is a vibrant community of religious studies scholars conducting research on religious diversity issues in Canada and beyond. While many scholars may not self-identify as active members within the interfaith movement, their work of providing accurate information about diverse religious beliefs and practices offers important resources for interfaith work and for forwarding the movement goal of celebrating religious diversity as a positive social norm. There are also several initiatives by local to federal government institutions whose work with interfaith councils aim to respect the religious needs of the increasingly diverse religious population.

Canadians also recognize and share many of the same challenges found in other nations including meeting the demand for equitable representation of religions, gender and marginalized voices. The various government sponsored formal representation

interfaith committees have realized some success in meeting this demand by making the effort to find representatives from diverse religious expressions to participate. Likewise, scholarly dialogue projects have also been able to attract diverse voices. Part of the attraction to either initiative is the clear guidelines for participation. In the case of the former, government sponsored interfaith committees may follow a set schedule of meetings (e.g., meet four times each year), with activities limited to a clear mandate of meeting the religious needs of the population served by the government institution (e.g., healthcare, corrections, community, etc.). In the case of the latter, scholarly conferences or programs follow a set start and end date whether it be for a conference, panel discussion or publication project. In both government and scholarly interfaith initiatives effort is still required to ensure gender equity of participants as male participants remain dominant in both.

Gender equity is realized more often or is at least more equitable within the organizational structures of many grassroots interfaith work where women are often active participants. However, many participants continue to raise concerns that gender equity is not always attainable when hosting panel discussions with invited religious leaders. The challenge is related to the current structure of many religious traditions that the leadership remains firmly within the male domain.

Another equity issue related to religious representation that is of particular importance to the Canadian grassroots context is the concern that more attention be directed toward addressing the absence of First Nations people at the interfaith table. This is a complex issue. Many First Nations communities are focused on negotiating diverse issues with various levels of government including land claims, socio-economic

inequities, residential school traumas and governance concerns. There are some dialogue efforts with Roman Catholic, Anglican and United Church Christian communities, but it is focused on reconciling abuses endured through residential school programs. Likewise, First Nations advisors are also called upon for advise on meeting traditional practices of First Nations people involved with chaplaincy programs in healthcare, the military and especially corrections services. The demands of these issues make it difficult to find individuals who have time for participating in grassroots interfaith activities, particularly if those activities are focused on the more general goal of religious education or celebrating religious diversity. That said, several grassroots groups have remarked that when a clear agenda or event of interest was proposed, representatives from First Nations have participated (e.g. the Salmon Blessing service in Vancouver). Another challenge for grassroots group is that many First Nations people are also Christian. Even if the Christian identity is a hyphenated one, this poses a problem around several interfaith dialogue tables that are often already criticized for the dominance or over-representation of Christians. As well, for those who follow traditional spiritual practices there may not be an interest to be a token member at a dialogue table, given the minority status and abuses First Nations people in Canada have had to endure, the idea of being the exotic religious specimen to be probed is perhaps not very appealing.

The exotic religious specimen factor may also be contributing to the limited involvement by Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and Buddhists in Canada. As one interviewee explained, "most are too busy meeting family and community needs to be a specimen [for interfaith work]" (Interview Montreal). Population growth within many immigrant religious communities, especially in urban centers, has over the past twenty-years

reached critical mass, resulting in what Raymond Breton calls an institutional completeness, a state in which religious, social, and cultural needs are met within the immigrant community (Breton 1964). As several long-standing participants explained, they joined interfaith groups shortly after immigrating to Canada (Interviews Montreal, Vancouver). Interfaith groups provided opportunities to build greater acceptance for the extreme minority status of the religious community and also offered a forum for sharing accurate information about the tradition and practices with individuals from the larger mostly Christian community. By the turn of the century, the extreme minority status had evolved to a mostly self-supporting minority that has a respected space within the larger culture. As well, many see that acceptance of various forms of diversity, including religious diversity, has become more normative, thus the need to dispel religious stereotypes and counter prejudice has become less pressing. As a result there are now fewer individuals from minority religious communities interested in participating in open-ended grassroots interfaith work. The exception is found in those organizations that focus on action-oriented programming related to social justice or environmental concerns. Members from minority religious communities continue to be active as invited representatives on government sponsored interfaith councils.

As in the global context, in Canada many also recognize the need to include more conservative voices in the interfaith dialogue, voices that often lean toward or are firmly within the exclusive side of spectrum. However, at this point the effort seems to be still at the stage of identifying the need rather than working toward the goal. As McCarthy explains,

> It is one of the great challenges of the interfaith movement to find more and better incentives for those who might be religiously and socially conservative – whether they are white Evangelicals, Muslim immigrants, or black Pentecostals – to come into these programs, which all too often appear wholly irrelevant to their interests.
> McCarthy 2007, 200

Although not as pressing, there are also those who call for more open exchanges with non-religious 'seekers', agnostics and atheists, although without clear strategies for meeting this desire.

The absence of so many voices begs the question: how pluralistic is grassroots interfaith work when so many voices are not represented? Perhaps it is time for grassroots organizations to either engage in more direct outreach to individuals from each of these missing constituencies, to discuss together which interfaith projects are of interest or most relevant, or develop programming that focus on activities or actions that speak more directly to religious duty or obligation. The Greening Sacred Spaces programs have realized some success in this regard. While most greening activities are focused on efforts within distinct communities, the shared purpose of being both religious and environmentally responsible generates a positive starting point for further dialogue (Biscotti and Woolsey Biggart 2014). As has been noted by many, interfaith works best with an issue or purpose.

Responding to social justice issues has been identified as a key motivation for many pursuing interfaith work. It has also been recognized as an important community-building activity creating space for people from diverse religious backgrounds to bond through the shared experience of fulfilling one's religious duty. Much social justice work is locally based and aimed at supporting impoverished or marginalized communities. Often the interfaith action is developed by bringing new religious groups into an existing

program. For example, a soup kitchen run by a Christian organization reframes the institutional structure to allow members of non-Christian organizations to participate. The result is a swelling of the volunteer pool to meet increasing needs of the community being served, and the opportunity for developing deeper relationships across faith traditions. However, the transformation of these previously Christian charitable activities to interfaith may also speak to the issue of dwindling membership and related reduction in volunteer time previously available through the Christian community. There were several interviewees who raised the issue of interfaith work as providing an opportunity to revitalize Christian churches, to bring a new purpose. As one interviewee explained, "the declining Church may find new life by reaching out" (Interview Vancouver). Such sentiments were not explicitly stated in the global interfaith resources reviewed but offer an important trajectory for future studies.

Although there are many guidelines for dialogue that are adapted to suit individual group objectives, an issue rarely discussed is the need for strategies to overcome conflict within interfaith dialogues. This is an issue that requires attention, especially given the call to push beyond the 'safe' conversations and openly address the more compelling or 'risky' questions about differences which have too often been the root of religious conflict. However, neither the Canadian participants nor the global interfaith resources offer much direction for how to accomplish this task. The absence of such resources may just be an issue of timing. First generation dialogue participants have been more focused on establishing contact with the religious other, on creating an equitable ground for getting to know one another with conversation focused more on what is shared across traditions. For second generation participants, encounters with

religious diversity have become more common, resulting in the desire for dialogue to go deeper, to address divisive issues. There are dialogue groups that do broach questions of difference and conflict, however participants have remarked that difficult conversations can sever relations too (Interviews Montreal). As McCarthy commented, "genuine dialogue is hard to do, and requires carefully established setting and guidelines, as well as commitments of time and the courage to take risks" (McCarthy 2007, 205). At this point deep dialogue strategies are still in development. As interfaith networks grow, so will access to the strategies and experiences of local to international organizations who have and continue to support deeper interfaith conversations.

The call for deeper interfaith discussion is also often accompanied by declarations of a real need for intrafaith dialogue to mine traditions for strategies to respectfully negotiate religious pluralism. This is particularly pressing as portraits of radicalized expressions of religion dominate the media. Here a focus on shared values across traditions (e.g., the Golden Rule), may be a useful entry point for humanizing and accepting the religious other. Within the interfaith movement there is also need to encourage participants to be more active in sharing their interfaith experiences with co-religionists. In Canada, this step in the bridge building process is often missed, with several participants claiming that their co-religionists are just not interested or would challenge them about time spent away from the community.

There is a shared concern for renewal of the movement in Canada and globally. While the movement has grown exponentially, especially since the 1990s, there has also been a significant transformation to the viability of long-standing groups. Several organizations across Canada have folded or have become dormant, a trend also evident in

the global interfaith movement. Why? There are several factors that may be at play. In Canada, many religious communities have experienced a decline in active membership reducing the potential pool for interfaith work. This is particularly evident within mainline Christian churches which have redirected energy towards maintaining their own members. Several interviewees also pointed to the acceptance of religious diversity as a new social norm, another distinct identity accepted within cosmopolitan urban centers. As one participant claimed, "Jewish-Christian relations are much better than forty years ago" (Interview Montreal). Busy lifestyles and competition for people's time have also been identified as deterrents. As one interviewee mentioned, "if the World Cup is on at the same time as an interfaith event there will be less people" (Interview Vancouver). Others suggest that more resources are required for these primarily volunteer organizations to effectively develop their outreach programs. While all important factors, they are not unique issues. Successful interfaith groups tend to create programming that provides important points of connection, a purpose that satisfies spiritual and/or social needs. For struggling organizations, maybe the first step is to consider a change in programming.

A unique trait within the Canadian context is the near absence of political engagement by interfaith organizations. Very few Canadian interfaith organizations offer public statements about political issues, even for issues that are clearly dealing with issues of faith in the public square. The case of Quebec interfaith organizations avoiding the call for public input by the Reasonable Accommodation Commission is Quebec was a particularly pointed example. In the fall of 2013, Quebec once again grappled publicly with the issue of interfaith relations with the provincial government introducing a

proposal to adopt a "Charter of Values" that would limit the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols by government employees. The proposed legislation was a central feature of the provincial election in early 2014. Throughout the debate there were no official statements by any Quebec or Montreal interfaith organization. The exception being a small post on the website of the small group *Carrefour Foi et Spiritualité* who offered the following response:

> *La proposition du gouvernement concernant la charte des valeurs québécoises suscite beaucoup de réactions dans la population. Les gens réagissent, donnent leurs opinions, parfois avec rigueur et intelligence, parfois avec émotion et agressivité.*
>
> ***Carrefour Foi et Spiritualité*** *se sent interpellé par ce sujet dont l'enjeu est le vivre ensemble harmonieux dans un Québec pluraliste. Le débat est complexe. Les avis sont partagés.*
>
> *Nous vous proposons ici quelques* ***textes*** *et* ***livres*** *susceptibles de vous éclairer sur le sujet. Carrefour Foi et Spiritualité ne souhaite pas prendre position, pour l'instant du moins, mais désire contribuer à la réflexion en sélectionnant quelques ouvrages que nous considérons pertinents.*
>
> *Laïcité et Liberté de Conscience*(2011) Jocelyn Maclure and Charles Taylor
> *Quelle Laïcité ? (2013)* Bruno Demers et Yvan Lamonde
> *La Laïcité: 25 questions* (2008) Micheline Milot
> *Le Quebéc en quête de laïcité* (2011) Normand Baillargeon et Jean-Marc Piotte
> …
>
> (Carrefour Foi et Spirtualité website 2013)

The tentative position above and general apolitical nature of most interfaith organizations suggests that in Canada where one's religious identity is a private affair, public discussion about religion truly is a taboo subject. Within the Canadian and global interfaith movements a key motivation has been the desire to celebrate religion and religious people as positive contributors to social well-being. As radicalized forms of

religion are conflated into generalized negative stereotyping of religion that continue to be asserted within the public square, and the desire for 'moderate' religious voices is requested. Perhaps it is time for interfaith institutions to revisit the apolitical mandate.

Although scholarship about negotiating religious diversity has increased over the past few decades, the focus on placement within journals and academic texts, often only accessible through university libraries, has limited the circulation and potential contribution toward broad-reaching change in social attitudes about religious diversity. The limited reach is even recognized within seminaries where literature about the theology of pluralism is minimal to non-existent within the curriculum followed by most theology students or future Christian religious leaders. The emphasis on professional communication has at times been an obstacle in the ability or desire for the general public to access research by religious studies scholars. This has contributed to what appears to be a divide between scholarly and grassroots interfaith work. The fieldwork identified several groups who seem to be 'rebuilding the wheel', developing education programs without accessing either scholars with the community or literature produced by them. There is room within grassroots initiatives for greater input from scholars as resources who offer accessible, factual information about religion.

Interfaith work would also benefit from more effort dedicated to building bridges between government initiatives, scholars and grassroots organizations. In Canada government support of interfaith work is limited primarily to a few interfaith advisory councils related to specific government services. However, such councils rarely include or refer to religious studies scholars or members of grassroots interfaith organizations. There is room for government initiatives to incorporate the expertise and experience of

both scholars and grassroots participants in the shared effort of ensuring respectful relations within religious diversity.

9.2. Omissions for Future Consideration

The above characteristics are not the only aspects Canadians share with their counterparts within the global interfaith movement. The study uncovered several features missing from the Canadian profile that also seem to be missing from studies of the global movement.

For example, there is little to no discussion about the absence of ethnic Christians. As Table 3 (page 7) suggests, in Canada, Christians have been the largest pool of immigrants with many coming from diverse non-Western origins including Africa, South America, and along the Pacific Rim. For many mainstream Christian communities, this immigrant population has breathed new life into the community (Bramadat and Seljak, 2008). And yet, there are few to no ethnic Christians at the interfaith table. This seems odd given there is a concerted effort to attract other non-Christian ethnic religious communities to the table. Is this a double-standard or oversight? Are the non-Christian religions more exotic than the ethnic Christians? Are language barriers an issue? Are ethnic Christians stereotyped as being too conservative for interfaith groups? Or are there just too many Christians at the table already? As equitable representation is a concern raised by many within the interfaith movement, these are questions that are worthy of further attention and study.

A follow-up question also missing from the global literature or Canadian reflection is why are Christians so dominant within the interfaith movement? Are Christians really the religious tradition most engaged in celebrating religious diversity or are there other underlying motivations that could be mined? Are Christians coming to interfaith as allies to atone for past wrongs perpetrated against religious others throughout the colonial period? Or has curiosity about the 'exotic' other brought many to the table? Alternatively, could the steady decline of both membership and social authority of mainline Christian communities – the key Christian identities represented within the interfaith movement – have created the motivation to build stronger relations with religious others to bolster or defend the presence of religion in a post-Christian society? Likewise, does interfaith work offer an opportunity to renew Christian communities, provide a new cause to work for? There is need for further study by participants and scholars, both within and beyond the movement, to explore these questions in detail.

Related is the question of why the interfaith movement is primarily a Western movement? While there are interfaith organizations and activities the world over, the largest concentration is by far found within Western nations. Why? What makes religious diversity in Western nations an issue worthy of such focused attention? This question has been raised in part by participants from Eastern traditions including Buddhist, Hindu and Chinese traditions who have often be less interested in participating in interfaith activities because for them living with religious diversity is normal (Dhamma 1997; Gross 2005; King 2011). Here it seems more attention could be directed to studying the emphasis on interfaith work as a means to bridge relations amongst monotheistic traditions with a history of conflict (i.e., the Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam).

9.3. Considerations for Future Study of the Interfaith Movement

Aside from the participant scholars cited, there is a near absence of reference to interfaith work within social research by religious studies and social movement scholars. However, this absence is likely due mostly to the limited size of the interfaith movement and the early stage of its development. Although the 1893 World's Parliament of Religion has often been identified as the beginning of the modern interfaith movement, significant growth in the movement has only been realized in the past twenty years. That said, as this study demonstrates, the interfaith movement has the potential to be an important counter movement to the more studied trend toward religious radicalism. The emphasis on fostering respect for and / or celebration of religious diversity, to build bridges amongst religious communities and to educate the larger public about the value religion brings to society suggests the interfaith movement has contributed positively to the modern effort of negotiating religious diversity. There is certainly room for further study of this and other social impacts or contributions of the modern interfaith movement.

One area of study that would benefit from the attention of New Religious Movement theory is the noticeable trend within interfaith work of some participants, mostly young or the nominally/unaffiliated, claiming interfaith as a new religious identity. Within the interfaith movement, the greater majority of participants see interfaith work as a space where one can express, affirm and enrich one's religious identity. However, interfaith work has also attracted individuals with nominal or spiritual-but-not-religious identities who are looking for a community, a safe place to explore religious practice and thought. There are several active youth who have also

made declarations like “interfaith is my new religion” (Interviews Montreal). But what kind of religious identity is interfaith? Perhaps it is a hybrid or hyphenated identity held in tandem with a traditional identity or one that supersedes the original. What religious ideology or ritual is found within interfaith work that could support the development of a new religious identity? Who is making such claims and what might be found within a religious heritage that has influenced this shift? New Religious Movement (NRM) research may offer guidance for monitoring developments of this new expression.

Both scholars and participants recognize the need for strategies to more accurately assess the size and impact of the global interfaith movement. Although many acknowledge that the interfaith movement has realized significant growth since the 1990s, with organizations that span from international to local grassroots activities (Brodeur 2005, Kratz Mays 2009, McCarthy 2007, Pedersen 2004), the movement is still quite small, even marginalized, relative to other religious voices on the world stage. Given that many have voiced a strong desire to have interfaith cooperation become a social norm, greater attention needs to be directed to why the interfaith movement is so small? What tactics are required for further growth and greater impact?

Social Movement Theory (SMT) may offer guidance for better understanding the impact and potential of the interfaith movement. Susan Staggenborg explains that social movement theorists attempt to answer a variety of questions about the growth and impact of social movements which are relevant to activists and policy-makers as well as to social scientists (Staggenborg 2008, 15). Key questions include how do social movements originate, present issues, mobilize participants and bring about social change; how and why do they succeed or fail; do they create “new pools of activists, new vocabularies and

ideas (often disseminated by mass media), new cultural products and practices and changes in public consciousness" (ibid, 38). Measuring social movement outcomes or consequences are considered to be the most important and most difficult aspects to evaluate. As Susan Staggenborg explains,

> …there are numerous types of outcomes – intentional and non-intentional, long-term and short-term. Movements affect public policy, political access, culture, and institutions. … if they endure for some length of time, they don't produce single outcomes but rather multiple outcomes which require analysis of how the outcomes of one 'round' of actions influences future 'rounds'.
>
> Staggenborg 2008, 38

The interfaith movement has been a sustained campaign for over one hundred years that has blossomed with exponential growth in activity over the past twenty years. The groundwork of formal dialogue organizations from the 1960s to the 1980s has provided a range of tools and guidelines for engaging the religious other, has sustained long-term international organizations, and fed the exponential development of grassroots organizations throughout the 1990s to today. While Berthrong noted that in 1986 "interfaith" was a term unknown to most Canadians (Berthrong 1986), that is surely not the case today. Interfaith services have been recognized as the appropriate respectful response to public disasters (e.g., memorials services after the 1998 Swiss Air Crash in Halifax and in response to the events of 9/11). Likewise, most calendars are interfaith in that they include references to the holidays of diverse religious traditions. There was even a recent episode of the popular British mystery series "Inspector Lewis" which opened an episode with the presentation of an interfaith gathering held in an abbey near Oxford University (Inspector Lewis 2011).

Social Movement Theory may also be useful for exploring strategies for finding the necessary resources to support interfaith work. First introduced by McCarthy and Zald in 1973, Resource Mobilization Theory identifies both tangible and intangible assets critical to the success of any social movement (Staggenborg 2008, 16). The resources to monitor include:

> *Moral resources*, such as legitimacy;
> *Cultural resources,* including tactical repertoires and strategic know-how;
> *Social-organizational resources*, including movement infrastructures, networks, and organizational structures;
> *Human resources,* such as the labour and experience of activists;
> *Material resources,* such as money and office space
>
> (Staggenborg 2008, 16)

Added to the above list of resources are the extra advantages brought to social movements by religious people. As Rhys H. Williams explains, "religion is at its essence a cultural system that appraised the moral status of the world in terms of a divine, rather than worldly standard" (Williams 2003, 317). Within religious communities there exist built-in resources including spaces for collective action, an existing congregation of potential volunteers, and the ability to mobilize both material and symbolic resources. As William explains, "participants in a religiously based social movement often have their sacred duty and their immortal souls at stake for their actions" (ibid). Within the global and Canadian interfaith movement these resources abound. Interfaith organizations could benefit from directing more attention to the questions of how to best mobilize existing resources to maintain current activities and support further actions. Likewise, social movement theorists would find within the interfaith movement a unique blend of

promise-driven social activism and religious duty combined in the effort to achieve the common social goal of celebrating the value religious diversity brings to society.

In assessing the impact of interfaith work, there is also need to recognize the place of the movement within the larger human rights framework which many social movements have drawn upon in their efforts to redefine social attitudes, particularly since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. For example, the civil rights, women's rights, homosexual rights, disability rights movements, have each contributed to a shift in social attitudes in recognition and celebration of the unique attributes each individual expresses within society as a clear counter measure to discrimination and prejudice by governments and individuals alike. Although many rights-based social movements are defined as grievance-driven with a focus on changing the circumstances of a group suffering from a social disadvantage, there is growing field of research exploring the development of promise-driven social movements which aim to build social goods (Konieczny 2009; Price, Nonini, and Fox Tree 2008). People engaged in interfaith work are moved more by hope than protest. An active goal of the interfaith movement is to promote the positive contribution religious people and religious diversity brings to society, to counter the prominent portraits of radicalized religion, and to work with governments to ensure religious diversity is respected and protected. Promise-driven social movement theory offers participants and scholars an important trajectory for understanding the character, development and aims of the interfaith movement.

The promise-driven nature of the interfaith movement aligns with what Canadian philosopher and social theorist Charles Taylor describes as the concept of Modern Social Imaginaries (Taylor 2004). Taylor suggests that over the past four centuries the

underlying idea of moral society has undergone a double expansion in the extension and intensity of both the benefits realized and defense of individual rights as becoming more dominant and more important within Western social contexts (ibid, 5). As Taylor explains the presumption of equality has resulted in "the multiple equal treatment or non-discrimination provisions which are an integral part of most entrenched charters" (ibid). This shift has led to a re-imagining of society in which the two main ends of security and prosperity are principal goals (ibid, 14). For Taylor, this shift is not a just an intellectual exercise but a practical response for negotiating relations across diversity. Taylor describes the social imaginary as being:

> …something much broader and deeper than the intellectual schemes people may entertain when they think about social reality in a disengaged mode. I am thinking, rather, of the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.
>
> Taylor 2004, 23

The interfaith movement might be seen as an example of a movement that has sprung from and contributes to the modern social imaginary. For example the interfaith movement has built and continues to build spaces where religious people come together for public conversations with each other – conversations that acknowledge and respect "others to whom we are related in a certain way" (Taylor 2004, 26), perhaps as co-religionists more specifically or human beings more generally. How has the interfaith movement benefitted from this idea of modern social imaginaries? And perhaps more importantly, what specifically has the interfaith movement with its respect and

celebration of the religious other contributed? These are questions worthy of further consideration.

9.4. Going forward

The global interfaith movement has been recognized as an important vehicle for producing positive social capital – both bridging and bonding – that offers a range of tools and actions for negotiating religious diversity in a positive way. In Canada there is a small and dedicated group of religious people committed to the hope that interfaith work might contribute to fostering better interfaith interactions. For the most part, with some exceptions, the impact of Canadian interfaith work has been limited, especially at the grassroots levels where efforts to foster relations with more conservative religious voices is still a work in progress. Nonetheless, those engaged in interfaith work do provide a very public example of cooperation and positive relations amongst religious people. In an age of cynicism, and media accounts of violent acts by individuals following radicalized religious ideologies, the interfaith movement offers a positive example of a social resource worthy of support. To echo McCarthy, interfaith work is a social exercise that demonstrates how to "get [religious] pluralism right" (McCarthy 2007, 210).

With the Canadian government mandate to continue to grow the population through immigration, and that the median age of most minority religious communities is within child-bearing years, religious diversity in Canada will only increase. As such, it is essential that more tools be made available to assist immigrant and host communities to

build relations across cultural and religious divides, to counter negative stereotypes, and to provide additional forums for communicating social support programs to minority communities. However, in Canada, there have been limited resources dedicated to current interfaith activities, nor has there been investment in the development of local or regional interfaith councils. As has been demonstrated in England, the United States and Australia, government sponsored interfaith councils have become essential resources for building positive relations among diverse religious communities, especially within large urban centers. Interfaith councils ensure accurate information about religious diversity is offered and shared with diverse religious communities, call upon religious leaders to share important social program information with their congregations, support religious leaders opposing and preventing radicalization, and encourage greater integration of minority communities into the shared social values of civic society. In Canada the establishment of interfaith advisory committees or councils at the municipal, regional, provincial and federal levels would provide an integral resource for policy decision making, distributing government program information through religious communities, and negotiating religious diversity (Brodeur and Lamoureux Scholes 2010; Seljak 2007). Such committees could draw from a rich mix of religious studies scholars, religious leaders, interfaith practitioners and policy makers.

The Canadian interfaith movement is a small but present voice on the Canadian landscape. There is the potential for it to be a more active player in the effort to bridge religious diversity. However, for the movement to reach its potential, it requires further reflection. There is need to assess its position within the larger social imaginary of

building respectful relations through review of successes achieved thus far and addressing the various challenges that remain on the table. There is also a need for governments at all levels to provide more formal recognition and support of interfaith work to ensure the positive social capital such organizations currently offer local communities will be able to grow and serve the larger Canadian desire to make the religious mosaic work.

Bibliography

Abrahamic Faiths Peace Making. Official website. "Interfaith Peacemaking Curriculum" page. Accessed June 13, 2013. http://abrahamicfaithspeacemaking.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/For-One-Great-Peace-Study-Guide.pdf

Adams, Michael with Amy Lanstaff. 2007. *Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism.* Toronto, ON: Viking Canada (Penguin Group).

Alexander, H. A. 1995. "Editorial – Religious Education". *Religious Education.* 90 (2): 170-172.

Ammerman, Nancy T. 2010. "The Challenges of Pluralism: Locating Religion in a World of Diversity". *Social Compass.* 57(2): 154-167.

-----. 1997. "1996 Presidential Address: Organized Religion in a Volunteristic Society". *Sociology of Religion.* 58 (3): 203-215.

l'Assemblée des évêques catholiques du Québec (AECQ). Official Website. Accessed March 2010 to 2013. http://www.eveques.qc.ca/comites/interreligieux.html

Arai, Tosh and S. Wesley Ariarajah (eds). 1989. *Spirituality in Interfaith Dialogue*. Geneva : WCC Publications.

Ariarajah, S Wesley. 1999. *Not Without My Neighbour: Issues in Interfaith Relations.* Geneva : WCC Publications.

Asani, Ali S. 2000. "Muslims in South Asia: defining community and the `other'". In *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies.* 2 (2): 103-113.

Ata, Abe W. 2003. *Christian-Muslim Intermarriage in Australia: Identity, Social Cohesion or Cultural Fragmentation*. Melbourne: David Lovell.

Australian Immigration Department. Official website. Diversity and Social Cohesion Program webpage. Accessed January 15, 2011. http://www.immi.gov.au/living-in-australia/delivering-assistance/government-programs/dscp/

Australia Intercultural Society. Official website. Accessed March 10, 2010. http://www.intercultural.org.au/

Ayoub, Mahmoud. 2004. "Christian-Muslim dialogue: goals and obstacles". *Muslim World: A journal devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.* 94 (3): 312-319.

-----. 1995. "Jesus the Son of God: a Study of the terms *Ibn* and *Walad* in the Qur'an and Tafsīr Tradition". In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida. 43-53.

Azirihi, Abderrazzak. 1996. "Necessity of dialogue". *Islamic Culture*. 70 (2): 19-26.

Aziz, Mokhtar. 1996. "Dialogue, mission and call - Islamic perspective - an analysis of cooperation between religious efforts by world institutions of different creeds". *Firmest Bond*. 62-63: 24-39.

Bader, Veit, 2009. "The Governance of Religious Diversity: Theory, Research, and Practice." In *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen`s University Press. 43-72.

Banerjee, Sikata and Harold Coward. 2005. "Hindus in Canada: Negotiating Identity in a "Different" Homeland". *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman. 52-68.

Barker, Eileen. 2008. *The Centrality of Religion in Social Life: Essays in honour of James A. Beckford.* Edited by Eileen Barker. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Baum, Gregory, 1962. *The Catholic Quest for Christian Unity*. Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist Press.

Baumer-Despeige, Odette. 1989. "A Pilgrimage to One's Own Roots – A Precondition to Religious Dialogue?" In *Inter-Religious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier.* Edited by M. Darroll Bryant and Frank Flinn. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishing. 65-88.

Beaman, Lori G. (ed) 2012 (2006). *Religion and Canadian Society: Contexts, Identities, and Strategies.* Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholar`s Press.

-----. 2008. *Defining Harm: Religious Freedom and the Limits of the Law.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Beaman, Lori G. and Peter Beyer (eds). 2008. *Religion and Diversity in Canada.* Leiden, NL: Brill.

-----. 2007. *Globalization, Religion and Culture*. Leiden, NL: Brill.

Beckford, James A. 2011. "Religious Diversity and Social Problems: The Case of Britain". In *Religion and Social Problems.* Edited by Titus Hjelm. New York, NY: Routledge. 53-66.

-----. 2003. *Social Theory and Religion.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Beckford, James and Sophie Gilliat. 1998. *Religion in Prison: 'Equal Rites' in a Multi-Faith Society*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Bellah, Robert N. 1987. "Conclusion: Competing Visions of the Role of Religion in American Society". In *Uncivil Religion: Interreligious hostility in America.* Edited

by Robert Bellah and Frederick E. Greenspahn. New York, NY: Crossroad. 219-232.

Berthrong, John H. 1999. *The Divine Deli: Religious Identity in the North American Cultural Mosaic.* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books.
-----. 1993. *Interfaith Dialogues: An Annotated Bibliography.* Compiled by John H. Berthrong. Bakersfield, CA: Multifaith Resources.
-----. 1985. "Interfaith Dialogue in Canada". *Ecumenical Review.* 37 (4): 462-470.

Bertrone, Vanessa. 2006. "High School Students have Mixed Feelings About Ontario's Mandatory World Religions Course". *Catholic Register*. Online version accessed March 15, 2007. http://www.catholicregister.org/home/item/9309-high-school-students-have-mixed-feelings-about-ontarios-mandatory-world-religions-course

Beversluis, Joel (ed). 2000. *Sourcebook of the World's Religions: An Interfaith Guide to Religion and Spirituality.* Novato, CA: New World Library.

Beyer, Peter. 2011. "Religious Diversity and Globalization". In *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Chad Meister. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 185-200.
-----. 2006. *Religions in Global Society*. London, UK: Routledge.
-----. 2005a. "Religious Identity and Educational Attainment among Recent Immigrants to Canada: Gender, Age, and 2nd Generation". *Journal of International Migration and Integration.* 6: 177-199.
-----. 2005b. "The Future of Non-Christian Religions in Canada : Patterns of Religious Identification among Recent Immigrants and Their Second Generation, 1981-2001". *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses.* 34: 165-196.
-----. 2003a. "Religions in Global Society: Transnational Resource and Globalized Category`. In *Globalization and Society; Processes of Differentiation Examined*. Edited by in R. Breton and J. Reitz. Westport, CT: Praeger. 153-162.
-----. 2003b. "Social Forms of Religion and Religions in Contemporary Global Society". In *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*. Edited by Michelle Dillon. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 45-60.
-----. 2003c. "Constitutional Privilege and Constituting Pluralism: Religious Freedom in National, Global, and Legal Context". *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 42: 333-339.
-----. 2000. "Modern Forms of the Religious Life: Denomination, Church, and Invisible Religion in Canada, the United States, and Europe". In *Rethinking Church, State, and Modernity*. Edited by D. Lyon. Toronto: University of Toronto. 189-210.
-----. 1999. "Secularization for the Perspective of Globalization: A Response to Dobbelaere". *Sociology of Religion.* 60 (3): 289-301.
-----. 1995. "Religious Vitality in Canada: The Complementarity of Religious Market and Secularization Perspectives". *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion.* 34 (4): 71-90.

Bharat, Sandy and Jael Bharat (eds). 2007. *A Global Guide to Interfaith: Reflections From Around the World.* Winchester, UK: O Books.

Bibby, Reginald. 2002. *Restless Gods.* Toronto, ON: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited.
-----. 1997. "The Persistence of Christian Religious Identification in Canada." *Canadian Social Trends.* 44: 24-28.
-----. 1993. *Unknown Gods: The Ongoing Story of Religion in Canada.* Toronto, ON: Stoddart.
-----. 1987. *Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada.* Toronto, ON: Irwin.

Bibby, Reginald W, Hewitt, W.E, and Roof, Wade Clark. 1998. "Religion and Identity: the Canadian, American, and Brazilian Cases". *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* (Leiden, Netherlands). 39 (2): 237-50.

Biles, John and Humera Ibrahim. 2005. " Religion and Public Plicy: Immigration, Citezenship, and Multiculturalism – Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?". In *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press. 154 -176.

Bird, Frederick. 1996. "Good Conversations". In *The Muted conscience: Moral Silence and the Practice of Ethics in Business.* Westport CT: Quorum Books. 191-250.

Biscotti, Dina and Nicole Woolsey Biggart. 2014. "Organizing Belief: Interfaith Social Change Organizations in the Religious-Environmental Movement". *Religion and Organization Theory Research in the Sociology of Organizations*. 41: 413-439.

Boden, Alilson L. 2006. "Articulating What Is at Stake in Interreligious Work". *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 131-135.

Borkin, Josh. 2006. "The Next Generation". *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 83-89.

Borrmans, Maurice. 1990. *Interreligious Documents I: Guidelines for Dialogue Between Christians and Muslims (Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue).* Translated from the French by R. Marston Speight. New York, NY: Paulist Press.

Borsboom, Ad and Frans Jespers (eds). 2003. *Identity and Religion: A Multidisciplinary Approach*. Saarbrücken, Germany: NICCOS.

Bourque, Ron P. 2006. "Religious Pluralism and the Current and Future Structure of the Canadian Forces Chaplaincy". In *Chaplains in War and Peace: Ethical Dilemmas*

of Conscience and Conflicting Professional Roles in Military Chaplaincy in Canada. Victoria, BC: Center for Studies in Religion and Society. 81-110.

Boullata, Issa J. 1995. "*Fa-stabiqū ›l-khayrāt*: A Qur'anic Principle of Interfaith Relations". In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida. 43-53.

Bouma, Gary D. 1995. "The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia: A Multicultural Society". *Sociology of Religion*. 56 (3): 285-302.

-----. (ed). 1997. *Many Religions, All Australian: Religious Settlement, Identity and Cultural Diversity.* Adelaide, South Australia: Open Book Publishers.

Bowlby, Paul W. R. 2003. "Diasporic Religions in Canada: Opportunities and Challenges". *Canadian Issues/Themes Canadiens.* May 2003. 45-46.

Bramadat, Paul, 2009. "Religious Diversity and International Migration: National and Global Dimensions" . In *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen`s University Press. 1-26.

-----. 2005. "Religion, Social Capital and 'The Day that Changed the World' ". *Journal of International Migration and Integration.* 6(2): 201-217.

Bramadat, Paul and Matthias Koenig (eds). 2009. *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity.* Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Bramadat, Paul and David Seljak (eds). 2008. *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

-----. 2005. *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman.

Braybrooke, Marcus. 1992. *Pilgrimage of Hope: 100 Years of Global Interfaith Dialogue*. London: SCM Press.

Breton, Raymond. 1964. "Institutional completeness of Ethnic communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants". *American Journal of Sociology.* 70 (2): 193-205.

British Columbia Interfaith Bridging Project. Official website. Accessed January 15, 2012. http://www.embracebc.ca/embracebc/funding/bridging/index.page

Brodeur, Patrice. 2005. "From the Margins to the Centers of Power: The Increasing Relevance of the Global Interfaith Movement". *Crosscurrents.* 55 (1): 42-53.

-----. 2003. "Description of the "Guidelines for Interfaith Celebrations". Website for the Massachusetts Council of Churches. 42-53.

-----. 1999. “Arabic Muslim Writings on Contemporary Religions Other Than Islam”. In *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. New York, New York: Oxford University Press. 240-249.

Brown, Malcolm D. 2002. “An Ethnographic Reflection on Muslim-Christian Dialogue in the North of France: the context of laicite”. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.* 13 (1): 5-23.

Bryant, M. Darrol and Doris Jakobsh. 1993. *A Canadian Interfaith Directory – 1993.* Waterloo, ON: Renison College.

Bryant, M. Darrol and Frank Flinn (eds). 1989. *Inter-Religious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier.* St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishing.

Cameron, Avril. 1999. “Interfaith Relations in the First Islamic Century”. *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies.* 1 (2): 1-12.

Carroll, Jackson and Wade Clark Roof. 1993. *Beyond Establishment: Protestant Identity in a Post-Protestant Age.* Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE). Official wwebsite. Student Training Page. Accessed March 5, 2010. http://www.cappe.org/students/index.html

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) website. 2013c. “Supreme Court to hear ethics course appeal by Quebec high school: Private Catholic high school wants to teach ethics, religions from its own perspective”. Published June 13, 2013. Accessed June 13, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/story/2013/06/13/montreal-loyola-supreme-court-appeal-religions-ethics-course.html

-----. 2013b. “Feds rehire some non-Christian prison chaplains”. Published April 15, 2013. Accessed August 25, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2013/04/05/bc-federal-prison-chaplain-cuts.html

-----. 2013a. “B.C. prisoners’ rights group protests non-Christian chaplain layoffs”. Published March 15, 2013. Accessed August 25, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2013/03/15/bc-prison-chaplain-minorities.html

-----. 2012b. “Non-Christian prison chaplains chopped by Ottawa”. Published October 4, 2012. Accessed August 25, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2012/10/04/bc-non-christian-prison-chaplains-cancelled.html

-----. 2012a. “Wiccan priest hire reversed by federal minister”. Published September 5, 2012. Accessed May 26, 2013. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2012/09/05/bc-wiccan-priest-prison.html

-----. 2007. “Quebec politicians, Muslims slam new election rules on veils: Federal law now allows women wearing niqabs or burkas to vote with their faces concealed”.

Published September 6, 2007. Accessed March 27, 2010. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/story/2007/09/06/qc-niqab0906.html

-----. 2006. "Ontario Premier rejects use of Shariah law". Published September 9, 2005. Accessed March 27, 2010. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2005/09/09/sharia-protests-20050909.html

Canadian Center for Ecumenism. Official Website. Accessed multiple times from 2006 to 2013. http://www.oikoumene.ca/

Canadian Center for Studies in Religion and Society. Official Website. Accessed July 2, 2006 (and several times since). http://csrs.uvic.ca/index.php

Canadian Press. 2012. "Canada's prison agency to hire Wiccan chaplain to perform rituals for B.C. prisoner". Published by the *National Post.* September 5, 2012. Accessed from National Post website on May 26, 2013. http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/09/05/canadas-prison-agency-will-hire-wiccan-chaplain-to-perform-rituals-for-b-c-prison-inmates/

Capps, Walter H. 1995. *Religious Studies: The Making of a Discipline.* Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press.

Carrefour Foi et Spiritualite. 2013. Official Website. "Charte des valeurs quebecoises". Accessed September 7, 2013. http://foi-spiritualite.ca/?page_id=2187

Casanova, José. 2001. "Religion, the New Millennium, and Globalization". *Sociology of Religion.* 62 (4): 415-441.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2003. "Grounded Theory in the 21st Century: Applications for Advancing Social Justice Studies". In *Sage Handbook on Qualitative Research: 3rd Edition.* Edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication. 507 – 536.

Choquette, Robert. 2004. *Canada's Religions*. Ottawa, Ontario: University of Ottawa Press.

Clarke, Peter. 1998. "Islamic Fundamentalism and the Construction fo the Self in post-Modern Society". In *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue?* Edited by Jorgen S. Nielsen. New York, NY: I.B. Tauris Publishers. 143-151.

Clooney, Francis X. S.J. 1990. "Reading the World in Christ: From Comparison to Inclusivism". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 63-80.

Cobb, John B. Jr. 1990. "Beyond "Pluralism". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books. 81-95.

Coleman, John A., S.J. 2003. "Religious Social Capital: Its Nature, Social Location and Limits". In *Religion as Social Capital: Producing the Common Good.* Edited by Corwin Smidt. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press. 33-48.

Como, Michael. 1989. "Listening to the Silence: through Zen and Taizé". In *Spirituality in Interfaith Dialogue*. Edited by Tosh Arai and S. Wesley Ariarajah. Geneva : WCC Publications. 3-7.

Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences . Official Website. Accessed March 27, 2010. http://www.accommodements-quebec.ca/commission/mandat-en.html

Conseil des relations interculturelles Montreal. 2005. "Laicity and Religious Diversity Quebec's Approach: Report to the Minister of Citizen Relations and Immigration". *Journal of International Migration and Integration*. 6 (2):291-326.

Corrections Services Canada Website. "Interfaith Chaplaincy" Accessed August 24, 2009. http://interfaithchaplaincy.ca/

-----. "CSC Chaplaincy Impact Project Religious and Spiritual Services Report*". October 2007. Accessed May 26, 2013.

Côté, Pauline. 2008. "Quebec and Reasonable Accommodation: Uses and Misuses of Public Consultation". In *Religion and Diversity in Canada.* Edited by Lori G. Beaman and Peter Beyer. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Press. 41–66.

Cousins, Ewert H. 1989. "Interreligious Dialogue: The Spiritual Journey of Our Time". In *Inter-Religious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier.* Edited by M. Darroll Bryant and Frank Flinn. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishing.

Cowan, Douglas. 2008. "Fearing Planes, Trains, and Automobiles: Sociophovics and the Discincentive to Religious Diversity". In *Religion and Diversity in Canada.* Edited by Lori G. Beaman and Peter Beyer. 2008Leiden, NL: Brill. 67-84.

Coward, Harold. 2006. "Taking its Interdisciplinary Heritage Seriously: The Future of Religious Studies in Canada". *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*. 35 (3-4): 403-412.

-----. 2000a. *Pluralism in the World Religions: A Short Introduction*. Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications.

-----, 2000b. *Visions of a New Earth: Religious Perspectives on Population, Consumption, and Ecology*. Edited by Harold Coward and Daniel C. Maguire. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

-----, (ed) 1999. *A Cross-Cultural Dialogue on Health Care Ethics.* Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
-----, (ed). 1995. *Population, Consumption, and the Environment: Religious and Secular Responses.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
-----. (ed) 1990. Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
-----, 1985. Pluralism: Challenge to World Religions. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

Cragg, Kenneth. 1995. "*Ismāʿīl al-Fārūqī* in the Field of Dialogue". In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida. 399-411.

Cracknell, Kenneth (ed). 2001. *Wilfred Cantwell Smith: A Reader.* Edited by Kenneth Cracknell. Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications.

D'Costa, Gavin. 1990. "Christ, the Trinity, and Religious Plurality". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 16-29.

De Gruchy, John W. 2004. "Christianity, Judaism , and Islam and the Restoration of Justice in South Africa". In *The Stranger's Religion: Fascination and Fear.* Edited by Anna Länström. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 38 - 53.

Demerath, J. 2008. "A Movement without a Crisis is a Movement with a Crisis: A Paradox in search of a Paradigm". In *The Centrality of Religion in Social Life: Essays in honour of James A. Beckford.* Edited by Eileen Barker. Hampshire, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited. 93-102.

Denny, Frederick Mathewson. 1995. "The Umma in North America: Muslim 'Melting Pot' or Ethnic 'Mosaic'". In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Saidan Haddad. 1995. Gainesville : University Press of Florida.

Deutsch, Eliot. 2004. "Holy Otherness: religious Differences Revisited". In *The Stranger's Religion: Fascination and Fear.* Edited by Anna Länström. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press. 38-53.

Dhamma, Rewata. 1997. "What I Expect of Friendship with Christians". *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue.* 7 (1). 48-55.

Dialogue Institute Website. Accessed January 15, 2010. http://institute.jesdialogue.org

Driver, Tom F. 1987. "The Case for Pluralism". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 203-218.

Durran, Khalid. 1996. As quoted by Sallie King, 1998. “”A Global Ethic in the Light of Comparative Religious Ethics.” In *Explorations in Global Ethics: Comparative Religious Ethics and Interreligious Dialogue*. Eds. Sumner B. Twiss and Bruce Grelle. Colorado: Westview Press. 129-130

-----. 1992. “Muslims and Non-Muslims”. In *Muslims in Dialogue: the Evolution of a Dialogue.* Edited by Leonard Swidler. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press. 87-110.

Dyck, David. 2001. “Islam and Christianity as sources of Conflict and Resources for Peace on the Island of Mindanao in the Philippines: A Case Study of Two Interfaith Peace-building Initiatives”. In *Approaches, Foundations, Issues, And Models Of Interfaith Relations.* Edited by David Emmanuel Singh, Robert Edwin Schick. Delhi, India: Jointly published by Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Henry Martin Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad. 470-490.

D'Souza, Mario O. 2000. “Religious Particularism and Cultural Pluralism: The Possible Contribution of Religious Education to Canadian Political Identity”. *Religious Education*. 95 (3): 234-249.

Eck, Diana L. 2003. “Religious Pluralism, on the Ground and in the Pulpit”. *Union Seminary Quarterly Review.* 56 (3-4): 167-178.

-----. 1985 “Inter-religious dialogue as a Christian Ecumenical Concern”. In *The Ecumenical Review.* 37 (4). 406-419.

Elijah Interfaith Institute. Official website. Accessed March 15, 2010. http://www.elijah-interfaith.org/index.php?id=522

Engler, Steven. 2011. “Grounded Theory”. In *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion.* Edited by Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. 256-274.

Esposito, John. L. 2004. “Moderate Muslims: A Mainstream of Modernists, Islamists, Conservatives, and Traditionalists”. *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences.* 22 (3): 11-20.

Faḍl Allāh, Muḥammad Ḥusayn. 2000. “Improving East/West relations through dialogue and inter-religious understanding. Interview with Imam Muhammad Hussein Fadlallah”. *Middle East Affairs Journal*. 6 (1): 129-133.

Faith Decade for Peace Official Website. “Initiative for a UN Decade of Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding and Cooperation for Peace”. Accessed, January 3, 2011. http://faithdecadeforpeace.net/

Farina, Sister Marianne, C.S.C. 2002. "Beyond Tolerance: Interfaith Friendship as Ethics in Action". *Religion East & West.* June 2002. 83 – 89.

Fiedelman, Charlie. 2009. "Quebec parents protest Quebec ethics course". *Montreal Gazette.* April 26, 2009. Accessed from Montreal Gazette website April 26, 2009. http://www.montrealgazette.com/Life/Quebec+parents+protest+ethics+religion+course/1534859/story.html

Fernandes, Rolph. 2001. "Islam and Inter-Religious Encounter in Trinidad". In *Approaches, Foundations, Issues, And Models Of Interfaith Relations.* Edited by David Emmanuel Singh, Robert Edwin Schick. Delhi : Jointly published by Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and Henry Martin Institute of Islamic Studies, Hyderabad. 438-452.

Filteau, Jerry. 2012. "Muslim challenges campuses to make interfaith cooperation the norm: No Longer a niche movement". *National Catholic Reporter.* March 2-15, 2012. 6a.

Fines, David. 2013. "Editorial". *Ecumenism*. Fall 2012 – Winter 2013. 4.

Fleishacker, Sam. 2005. "Second Response: Friendship Over Justice". *Cross Currents*. Spring 2005. 25-28.

Foley, Michael W. and Dean R. Hoge. 2007. *Religion and the New Immigrants: How Faith Communities Form Our Newest Citizens.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Foster, A Durwood. 1989. "Current Interreligious Dialogue". In *Inter-Religious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier.* Edited by M. Darroll Bryant and Frank Flinn. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishing. 86-97.

Fredericks, James L. 1998. "Interreligious Freindship: A New Theological Virtue". *Journal of Ecumenical Studies.* 35 (2). 159-174.

Gagnon, Mireille. 2008. "Old Structures, New Faces: The Presence of Wicca and Neopaganism in Canadian Prison Chaplaincies". In *Religion and Diversity in Canada.* Edited by Lori G. Beaman and Peter Beyer. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill Press. 149–174.

Gardner, Gary. 2002. *Invoking the Spirit: Religion and Spirituality in the Quest for a Sustainable World.* Danvers, MA: Worldwatch Institute.

Geddes, John. 2009. "What Canadians think of Sikhs, Jews, Christians, Muslims ... a disturbing new poll reveals the limits of religious tolerance in Canada" *Maclean's*. 122.16 (May 4, 2009): 20-32.

Gilkey, Langdon. 1987. "Plurality and Its Theological Implications". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 37-51.

Goddard, Hugh. 2001. "Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria and Malaysia". In *Islamic Interpretations of Christianity*. Ed. L. Ridgeon. Richmond, VT: Curzon. 231-247.

-----. 2000. *A History of Muslim-Christian Relations*. Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press Ltd. 142-198.

-----. 1996. *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity.* London, UK: Grey Seal Books. 1-140.

-----. 1995. *Christians and Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding.* Surry, Great Britain: Curzon Press. 147-166.

Government of Canada Justice Laws Website. 2013. "Canadian Multiculturalism Act". Accessed August 13, 2013. http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-18.7/page-1.html

Greenspahn, Frederick E. 1987. "Introduction". In *Uncivil Religion: Interreligious hostility in America.* Edited by Robert Bellah and Frederick E. Greenspahn. New York, NY: Crossroad. vii-ix

Griffin, David Ray (ed). 2005. *Deep Religious Pluralism.* Edited by David Ray Griffen. Louisville, KT: Westminister John Knox Press.

Gross, Rita. 2005. "Excuse Me, but What's the Question? Isn't Religious Diversity Normal?" In In *The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism.* Edited by Paul Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 75-87..

Guinn, David E, Christopher Barrigar and Katherine K. Young (eds). 1999. *Religion and Law in the Global Village.* Atlanta, GE: Scholars Press.

Haq, Mushirul. 1999. "Muslim understanding of Hindu religion". In *Islam and the Modern Age*. 30 (4): 314-321.

Hassan, Riffat. 1992. "The Basis for a Hindu-Muslim Dialogue and Steps in that Direction from a Muslim perspective". In *Muslims in Dialogue: the Evolution of a Dialogue.* Edited by Leonard Swidler. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press. 403-423.

Heaton, Tim B. 1990. "Religious Group Characteristics, Endogamy, and Interfaith Marriages". *Social Analysis.* 51 (4): 363-376.

Hick, John. 2005. "The Next Step Beyond Dialogue". In *The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism.* Edited by Paul Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 3-12.

----. 1987. "The Non-Absoluteness of Christianity". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 16-36.

Hick, John and Paul Knitter. 1987. In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 149-161.

Hjelm, Titus (ed). 2011. *Religion and Social Problems.* Edited by Titus Hjelm. New York, NY: Routledge.

-----. 2011. " Religion and Social Problems: Three Perspectives". In *Religion and Social Problems.* Edited by Titus Hjelm. New York, NY: Routledge. 1-11.

Hornung, Maria. 2008. "Conclusion: Making Dialogue Real". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 97-108.

Hoover, Dennis R. and Den Dulk, Kevin R. 2004. "Christian Conservatives Go to Court: Religion and Legal Mobilization in the United States and Canada". *International Political Science Review.* 25 (1): 9-34

Howe, Edith and s. Mark Heim. 2008. "The Next Thing to Dialogue". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 47 - 60.

Hussain, Amir. 2006. *Oil and Water: Two Faiths: One God*. Kelowna, BC: Copper House.

-----. 2003. "Muslims, Pluralism, and Interfaith Dialogue". In *Progressive Muslims: On Justice, Gender and Pluralism.* Edited by Omid Safi. Oxford, UK: Oneworld Press. 251-269.

Inspector Lewis. 2011. "Wild Justice". British Television Series. Series four, episode 2. First Aired 10 April, 2011.

Interfaith Unity website. 2002. Official website for the Interfaith Unity Newsleter (Toronto). Accessed multiple times between 2006 and 2013. http://www.interfaithunity.ca/index.htm

Interreligion/Interreligieux. 2010. Official website for the Comité Musulmans-Chrétiens Du Québec. Accessed multiple times between 2006 and 2013. http://interreligion.mafr.net/comite_dialogue_presentation.html

Jakobsh, Doris. R. 2006. "Sikhism, Interfaith Dialogue, and Women: Transformation and Identity". Journal of Contemporary Religion. 21 (2): 183-199.

James, William C. 1999. "Dimorphs and Cobblers: Ways of Being Religious in Canada." *Studies in Religion/Sciences religieuses*. 28 (3): 275-291.

Jedwab, Jack. 2008. "Religion and Social Capital in Canada". *Canadian Diversity(é) Canadienne.* 6 (1): 25-46.

Johnstone, P. 1987. "Articles from Islamic journals: an Islamic perspective on dialogue. Introduction and translation by P. Johnstone". *Islamochristiana.* 13: 131-171.

Jones, C. 1994. "Women in Muslim-Christian dialogue". *Encounter (Rome).* 207-208: 3-32.

Kasimo, Harold and Byron L. Sherwin. 1991. *No Religion is an Island: Abraham Joshua Heshel and Interreligious Dialogue.* Edited by Harold Kasimow and Byron L. Sherwin. Maryknow, NY: Orbis Books.

Kaufman, Gordon D. 1987. "Religious Diversity, Historical Consciousness and Christian Theology". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 3-15.

Keating, Thomas. 1989. "Search for Ultimate Mystery". In *Inter-Religious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier.* Edited by M. Darroll Bryant and Frank Flinn. St. Paul, MN: Paragon House Publishing. 65-83.

Keely, Avril Anne. 2006. "Beginning Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Western Sydney: Context and Practice". *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.* 17 (4): 471-482

Keen, James P. 2006. Ýoung Adult Development, Religious Identity, and Interreligious Solidarity in an Interfaith Learning Community". In *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 25 – 42.

Kelley, Ninette and Michael J. Trebilcock. 1998. *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Kim, Andrew E. 1993. "The Absence of Pan-Canadian Civil Religion : Plurality, Duality, and Conflict in Symbols of Canadian Culture." *Sociology of Religion*. 54 (Fall 1993): 257-275.

King, Sallie B. 2011. "Interreligious Dialogue". In *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Chad Meister. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 101-114.

-----. 2005. "A Pluralistic View of Religious Pluralism". In *The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism.* Edited by Paul Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 88-101.

-----. 1998. "A Global Ethic in the Light of Comparative Religious Ethics". In *Explorations in Global Ethics: Comparative Religious Ethics and Interreligious*

Dialogue. Edis. Sumner B. Twiss and Bruce Grelle. Colorado: Westview Press. 118-140.

King, Ursula. 1998. "Feminism: the missing dimension in the dialogue of religions". In *Pluralism and the Religions: The Theological and Political Dimensions.* Edited by John D'Arcy May. London, UK: Cassel Publishers. 40-57.

Kline, J. Nathan. 2006. Heologies of Interreligious Encounters and Their Relevance to Youth". In *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 43 – 50.

Kniss, Fred and Gene Burns. 2004. "Religious Movement". In *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements.* Edited by David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule and Hanspeter Kreisi. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. 694-715.

Knitter, Paul. 2005. *The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism.* Edited by Paul Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

-----. 2003 (1985). *No Other Name?: A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

-----. 1995a. *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

-----. 1995b. "Pitfalls and Promises for a Global Ethics." *Buddhist-Christian Studies.* 15: 222-229.

Koenig, Matthias. 2009. "How Nation-States Respond to Religious Diversity" . In *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen`s University Press. 293-322.

Koieczny, Piotr. 2009. "Wikipedia: community or social movement?" In *Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements.* 1 (2): 212-232.

Kogan, Michael S. 2008. "Bringing the Dialogue Home". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 61-74.

Kratz Mays, Rebecca (ed). 2008. *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press.

Küng, Hans. 1993. "The History, Significance and Method of the Declaration Toward a Global Ethic". In *A Global Ethic : The Declaration of the Parliament Of The World's Religion.* Edited by Hans Küng and Karl-Josef Kuschel. London : SCM Press. 43-76.

Küng, Hans. 1993. "Global Ethic Foundation". As found on the official website for the Global Ethic Foundation http://www.weltethos.org/dat_eng/index_e.htm. Accessed September 15, 2003.

Kuschel, Karl-Josef. 1993. "The Parliament of the World's Religions, 1893-1993". In *A Global Ethic : The Declaration of the Parliament Of The World's Religion.* Edited by Hans Küng and Karl-Josef Kuschel. London : SCM Press. 77- 105.

Kymlicka, Will. 1998. *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada.* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
-----. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship.* Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press.

Lamb, Christopher. 1984. "Nineveh Revisted: Theory and Practice in Interfaith Relations". In *International Bulletin of Missionary Research.* 8 (4): 156-158.

Lambert, Yves. 1999. "Religion in Modernity as a New Axial Age: Secularization or new Religious Forms?" *Sociology of Religion.* 60 (3): 303-333.

Lamoureux Scholes, Laurie. 2007. "Making the Mosaic Work: A Preliminary Profile of the Interfaith Movement in Canada". *The Ecumenist*. 44 (2): 6-12.

Länström, Anna (ed). 2004. *The Stranger's Religion: Fascination and Fear.* Edited by Anna Länström. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press.

Larson, Lyle E. and Munro, Brenda. 1990. "Religious intermarriage in Canada in the 1980's." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*. 21(Summer 1990): 239-250

Lawrence, Bruce B. 2002. *New Faiths, Old Fears: Muslims and Other Asian Immigrants in American Religious Life*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Lefebvre, Solange (ed) 2005. *La Religion dans la sphere publique.* Edited by Solange Lefebvre. Montreal, QC: Les Presses de L'Université de Montréal.

Levine, Deborah J. 2006. "A Religious Diversity Tale: A Multi-Faith Case". *American Journal of Community Psychology*. 37 (3): 211-218.

Livezey, Lowell W. (ed). 2000. *Public Religion and Urban Transformation : Faith in the City.* New York, New York: New York University Press.
----. 2000. "The New Context of Urban Religion". In *Public Religion and Urban Transformation : Faith in the City.* Edited by Lowell W. Livezey. New York, New York: New York University Press. 3-27.
----. 2000. "Communities and Enclaves: Where Jews, Christians, Hindus, and Muslims Share the Neighborhoods". In *Public Religion and Urban Transformation : Faith in the City.* Edited by Lowell W. Livezey. New York, New York: New York University Press. 133-162.

Living in Harmony Australia. Official website. Accessed March 10, 2010. http://www.livinginharmony.edu.au/

Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland. 1995. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis – Third Edition.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council. Official website. Accessed March 10, 2010. http://www.miic.ca/

Mariati, Salam al-. 2004. "Christian-Muslim relations in North America. An activist's perspective". *Muslim World: A journal devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations*. 94(3): 373-375.

Marin-Guzman, Roberto. 2003. "Fanaticism: a major obstacle in the Muslim-Christian dialogue. The case of twentieth century Islamic fundamentalism". *Arab Studies Quarterly*. 25(3): 63-96.

Marks, John. 2006. "The Challenge of Islam: Encounters in Interfaith Dialogue." *Middle East Quarterly*. 13 (3): 1-2.

Marty, Martin. 2005. *When Faiths Collide.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Masud, Muhammad Khalid. 2001. "Naming the 'other': names for Muslims and Europeans in European and Muslim languages". In *Muslims and the West: Encounter and Dialogue*. Ed. Zafar Ishaq Ansari and John L. Esposito. Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, International Islamic University. 123-145.

McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. 1988. "Social Movements". In *The Handbook of Sociology.* Edited by Neil J. Smelser. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications. 695-737.

McCarthy, Kate. 2007. *Interfaith Encounters in America.* Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

-----. 2000. "Reckoning with Religious Difference: Models of Interreligious Moral Dialogue". In *Explorations in Global Ethics.* Edited by Sumner B. Twiss and Bruce Grelle. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. 73-117.

McCloud, Aminah. 2004. "Reflections on Dialogue". *Muslim World: A journal devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations.* 94 (3): 335-341.

McDonnough, Sheila. 1999. "The Muslims in South Asia (1847-1947)". In *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 250–262.

McGill Islamic Institute Official Website. "About – History". Accessed December 2010. http://www.mcgill.ca/islamicstudies/about/history

Meister, Chad (ed). 2011. *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Diversity.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Michel, Thomas. SJ. 2002. "A Variety of Approaches to Interfaith Dialogue". *Ecumenical Trends.* 31 (2): 1-6.

-----. 1991. "Inter-Faith Dialogue – A Catholic Christian Perspective". In *Inter-Faith Dialogue and World Community.* Edited by Rao, Ch. G. S. S. Sreenivasa. Madras, India: The Christian Literature Society. 28-37.

Millbank, John. 1990. "The End of Dialogue". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 174-193.

Miller, John W. (ed) 1986. *Interfaith Dialogue: Four Approaches.* Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo Press.

Milot, Micheline. 2009. "Modus Co-vivendi: Religious Diversity in Canada." . In *International Migration and the Governance of Religious Diversity.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and Matthias Koenig. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen`s University Press. 105-129.

Mitra, Kana. 1992. "Exploring the Possibility of Hindu-Muslim Dialogue". In *Muslims in Dialogue: the Evolution of a Dialogue.* Edited by Leonard Swidler. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press. 425-444.

Mitri, T. 1999. "Reflections on Mutual Perceptions and Dialogue". In *Muslim-Christian Perceptions of Dialogue Today.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. Leuven, Switzerland: Puitgeverij Peeters. 71-80.

Ministry des Éducation, Loisir et Sport Québec website. "Ethics and Religious Culture Program". Accessed March 15, 2010. https://www7.mels.gouv.qc.ca/DC/ECR/index_en.php?page=history

Mohammed, Khaleel. 2008. "The Art of Heeding". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 75- 86
.

Moltmann, Jurgen. 1990. "Is "Pluralistic Theology" Useful for the Dialogue of World Religions?". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 149-156.

Moon, Richard (ed) 2008. *Law and Religious Pluralism in Canada.* Edited by Richard Moon. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Morgan, Peggy. 1995. "The Study of Religions and Interfaith Encounter". *Numen.* 42: 156-177.

Morsink, Johannes, 1999. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Origins, Drafting and Intent.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Moussalli, A.S. 1998. "Islamic Fundamentalist Perceptions of other Monotheistic Religions". In *Islam and Christianity: Mutual Perceptions since the Mid-20th Century.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. Leuven, Switzerland: Puitgeverij Peeters. 121-158.

Munjid, Achmad. 2008. "Building a Shared Home for Everyone – Interreligious Dialogue at the Grass roots in Indonesia". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 109-120.

Murad, Khurram. 1999. " 'Living together' in a world of diverse faiths: an Islamic perspective". *Encounters: Journal of Inter-Cultural Perspectives*. 5 (1): 3-29.

Murata, Sachiko. 2003. "The Islamic Encounter with the Chinese Intellectual Tradition". In *Cultural Diversity and Islam.* Edited by Abdul Aziz Said and Meena Sharify-Funk. New York, NY: University Press of America. 107-118.

Muzalevsky, Roman. 2012. "Kazakhstan Views Its Inter-Faith Dialogue Initiative As Key to Global Security". *Eurasia Daily Monitor.* 9 (95): 1-4.

Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. 1998. "Islamic-Christian Dialogue – Problems and Obstacles to be Pondered and Overcome". *The Muslim World.* 88 (3-4): 218-237.

-----. 1995. "*Comments on a Few Theological Issues in Islamic-Christian Dialogue*". In *Christian-Muslim Encounters*. Edited by Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad and Wadi Zaidan Haddad. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida. 457 - 467.

National Defense and the Canadian Forces Official Website. "Canadian Forces Chaplain Branch". Accessed March 15, 2009. http://www.cmp-cpm.forces.gc.ca/cfcb-bsafc/index-eng.asp

National Post. 2012. "Canada's prison agency to hire Wiccan chaplain to perform rituals for B.C. prisoners". Posted on the National Post website September 9, 2012. Accessed May 27, 2013. http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/09/05/canadas-prison-agency-will-hire-wiccan-chaplain-to-perform-rituals-for-b-c-prison-inmates/

Nielson, Jorgen S. 1998. "Muslim Immigrant Communities and Foreign Policy in Western Europe". In *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue?*. Edited by Jorgen S. Nielsen. New York, NY: I.B. Tauris Publishers. 129-142.

Neville, Robert Commings. 2004. "Toward a Theology of World Religions: the Existential Threats". In *The Stranger's Religion: Fascination and Fear.* Edited by Anna Länström. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 113-131.

Newbigin, Lesslie. 1990. "Religion for the Marketplace". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 135-148.

North American Interfaith Network. Official Website. Accessed multiple times since June 2006. http://nain.org/

Numrich, Paul D. 2009. *The Faith Next Door: American Christians and Their New Religious Neighbors.* New York, New York: Oxford University Press.

-----. 2000. "Recent Immigrant Religions and the Restructuring of Metropolitan Chicago". In *Public Religion and Urban Transformation : Faith in the City.* Edited by Lowell W. Livezey. New York, New York: New York University Press. 239-267.

O'Connor, June. 1994. "Does a Global Village Warrant a Global Ethic?" *Religion* 24: 155-164.

O'Toole, Roger. 1996. "Religion in Canada: Its Development and Contemporary Situation." *Social Compass.* 43 (1): 119-134.

Ontario Multifaith Council. 2006. *Multifaith Information Manual- 4th Edition.* Toronto,ON: Ontario Multifaith Council.

Olson, Daniel V.A. and Kirk Hadaway. 1999. "Religious Pluralism and Affiliation Among Canadian Counties and Cities". *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion.* 38 (4): 490-508.

Osman, Fathi. 1998. "Monotheists and the `other': an Islamic perspective in an era of religious pluralism". *Muslim World*. 88 (3): 353-363.

Oxtoby, Willard G. 2001. "In Memoriam – Wilfred Cantwell Smith". *Buddhist-Christian Studies*. 21 (1): v-vi.

Pannenberg, Wolfhart. 1990. "Religious Pluralism and Conflicting Truth Claims: The Problem of a Theology of the World Religions". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 96-106.

Patel, Eboo and Patrice Brodeur (eds). 2006. *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Patel, Eboo. 2012. *Sacred Ground: Pluralism, Prejudice, and the Promise of America.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
-----. 2007a. *Acts of Faith: the Story of an American Muslim, in the Struggle for the Soul of a Generation.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
-----. 2007b. "Religious Diversity and Cooperation on Campus". *Journal of college and Character.* 9 (2): 1-7.
-----. 2006. "Affirming Identity, Achieving Pluralism". In *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 15-24.
-----. 2005. Ìnclusiveness and Justice: The Pitfalls and Possibilities of Interfaith Work`. *CrossCurrents.* 55 (1): 17-21.

Patel, Eboo, April Kunze, and Noah Silverman. 2008. "Storytelling as a Key Methodology for Interfaith Youth Work". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 25-34.

Patel, Eboo and Becca Hartman. 2009. "Religious Pluralism: Civil society's Hope in a Diverse Country". *InterScience.* DOI: 20.102/ncr.239. Spring 2009: 25-30.

Pedersen, Kusumita P. 2004. "The Interfaith Movement: An Incomplete Assessment*". In *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. 41 (1): 74 - 94.
-----. 2000. "Environmental Ethics in Interreligious Perspective." In *Explorations in Global Ethics.* Edited by Sumner B. Twiss and Bruce Grelle. Boulder, CO: Westview Press. 253-290.

Prager, Marcia and Rebecca Kratz Mays. 2008. "Friendship Counts Most". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 121-131.

Pratt, Douglas. 2005. *The Challenge of Islam : Encounters in Interfaith Dialogue.* Aldershot, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate. 171- 202.

Prothero, Stephen. 2007. *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know and Doesn't.* New York, NY: Harper Collins.
-----. 2004. "Hindupohobia and Hinduphilia in U.S. Culture. In *The Stranger's Religion: Fascination and Fear.* Edited by Anna Länström. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. 13-37.

Putnam, Robert D. and David E. Campbell. 2010. *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us.* New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
Quebec Ministry of Education. 2008. Ethics and Religious Culture Guide. Quebec, QC: Government of Quebec.

Rahner, Karl. "Anonymous Christians." *Theological Investigations.* 6 (1969): 390-398.

Rao, Ch. G. S. S. Sreenivasa (ed). 1991. *Inter-Faith Dialogue and World Community.* Madras, India: The Christian Literature Society.

Ravvin, Norman. 2005. "Jews in Canada: A Travelling Cantor on the Prairie, and Other Pictures of Canadian Jewish Life". *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman. 111-132.

Reimer, Samuel H. 1995. "A Look at Cultural Effects on Religiosity: A Comparison Between the United States and Canada." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion.* 34(D): 445-457.

Religious Coalition for Equal Marriage. n.d. "An Affirmation of Diversity". 1-3.

Rennick, Joanne Benham. 2010. "Towards an Interfaith Ministry: Religious Adaptation and Accommodation in the Canadian Forces Chaplaincy". *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses.* 39: 77-91.

-----. 2009. "Religion in the Canadian Military: Adapting to an Increasingly Pluralistic Society". *Horizons*. 10 (2): 40-43.

Rothstein, Mikael. 2007. "Weapons of mass Defamation: Aspects of the 2006 'Cartoon crisis'". *Temenos (The Finnish Society for the Study of Religion).* 43 (1): 115-134.

Rosenau, Josh. 2011. "Do Atheists Belong in the Interfaith Movement?". Blog post 2011/06. State Of Formation. *Journal of Interreligious Dialogue.* Official website: http://www.stateofformation.org/2011/06/do-atheists-belong-in-the-interfaith-movement. Accessed 2012/03/15.

Rousse, Ruth. 1967. "Voluntary Movements and the Changing Ecumenical Climate". In *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948.* Edited by Ruth Rouse and Stephen Charles Neill. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press. 309-350.

Rousseau, Richard W. 1985. *Christianity and Islam: The Struggling Dialogue*. Edited by Richard W. Rousseau. Scranton, PA: Ridge Row Press.

Rudolph, Ekkenhard. 1999. "The Debate on Muslim-Christian Dialogue as Reflected in Muslim Periodicals in Arabic (1970-1991)". In *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 297-307.

Samartha, Stanley J. 1987. "The Cross and the Rainbow". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 69-88.

Second Global Conference on World Religions After 9/11. Official website. Accessed August 5, 2011. http://gcwr2011.org/

Shadid, W.A.R. and P.S. van Koningsveld (eds). 2002. *Intercultural relations and Religious Authorities: Muslims in the European Union.* Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.

Seljak, David. 2009. "Dialogue Among the Religions in Canada". *Horizons*. 10 (2): 27-33.

-----. 2005. "Education, Multiculturalism and Religion". In *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman. 178-200.

Siddiqui, Ataullah. 1999. "Issues in Co-Existence and Dialogue: Muslims and Christians in Britain". In *Muslim-Christian Perceptions of Dialogue Today.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. Leuven, Switzerland: PUitgeverij Peeters. 183-200.

-----. 1997. *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sikand, Yoginder. 1999. "Building bridges between Sikhs and Muslims: the contribution of Khwaja Hasan Nizami". *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*. 9 (2): 178-188.

Singh, David Emmanuel and Robert Schick (eds). 2001. *Approaches, Foundations, Issues, and Models of Interfaith Relations.* Dehli, India: ISPCK

Smidt, Corwin. 1999. "Religion and Civic Engagement: A Comparative Analysis". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 565: 176-92.

Smith, Jane. 2007. *Muslims, Christians, and the Challenge of Interfaith Dialogue.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. 1993. *What is Scripture?: A Comparative Approach.* Minneapolis : Fortress Press.

-----. 1987. "Idolatry: In Comparative Perspective". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology Of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 53-68.

-----, 1976. *Religious Diversity: Essays by Wilfred Cantwell Smith.* Edited by Willard B. Oxtoby. New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Smock, Davie R. (ed). 2002. *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding*. Washington, DC : United States Institute of Peace Press.

Swidler, Leonard. 2008. "Understanding Dialogue". *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. 2008. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 9-24.

St. Mary's Hospital Center Pastoral/Spiritual Care Services. n.d. *Caring Across Cultures: Multicultural and Multifaith Considerations in Dying and Death.* Montreal, QC: St. Mary's Hospital Center Pastoral/Spiritual Care Services.

Staggenborg, Susan. 2012 (2008). *Social Movements.* Don Mills, Ontario.

Statistics Canada. 2013. "2011 National Household Survey: Immigration, place of birth, citizenship, ethnic origin, visible minorities, language and religion". May 8, 2013. Accessed August 29, 2013. http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/
-----. 2007. "Population by religion, by province and territory (2001 Census)". Accessed April 15, 2007. http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo30a-eng.htm
----. 2003a. "Pockets of belief: Religious Attendance patterns in Canada" by Warren Clark. *Canadian Social Trends.* Spring 2003. Catalogue Number 11-008. 1-6.
-----. 2003b. Official Website. "Religion" http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/companion/rel/canada.cfm.

Steenbrink, Karel. 1999a. "The Pancasila Ideology and an Indonesian Muslim Theology of Religions". In *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. New York : Oxford University Press. 280-296.
-----. 1999b. "Patterns of Muslim-Christian Dialogue in Indonesia, 1965-1998". In *Muslim-Christian Perceptions of Dialogue Today.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. Leuven, Switzerland: PUitgeverij Peeters. 81-114.

Sterkens, Carl. 2001. *Interreligious Learning: The Problem of Interreligious Dialogue in Primary Education.* Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.

Stephenson, Peter H. 2005. "Health Care, Religion and Ethnic Diversity in Canada". In *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada.* Edited by Paul Bramadat and David Seljak. Toronto, ON: Pearson Longman. 201-218.

Stoker, Valerie. 2007. "Zero Tolerance? Sikh Swords, School Safety, and Secularism in Québec". *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. 75 (4): 814-839.

Subramaniam, Prof. V. 1993. *Buddhist-Hindu Interactions: From Śakyamuni to Śankāracarya.* Edited by Prof. V. Subramaniam. Virginia, PN: Ajanta Publications.

Suchocki, Marjorie Hewitt. 1987. "In Search of Justice: Religious Pluralism from a Feminist Perspective". In *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by John Hick and Paul F. Knitter. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 149-161.

Surin, Kenneth. 1990. "A 'Politics of Speech': Religious Pluralism in the Age of the McDonald's Hamburger". In *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions.* Edited by Gavin D'Costa. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 192-211.

Supreme Court of Canada. Court File No. 29866. 2003. "Memorandum of Argument of the Proposed Intervener Interfaith Coalition on Marriage and Family". July 16, 2003.

Sway, Mustafa Abu. 2003. "Faith and Politics in Islam: What Paradigm?" In *Concilium: Learning From the Other Faiths.* London, UK: SCM Press. 70-78.

Sweet, Lois. 1997. *God in the Classroom: the Controversial Issue of Religion in Canadian Schools.* Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart.

Swidler, Leonard. 2008a. "Preface". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. ix – xi.
-----. 2008b. "Understanding Dialogue". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 9-24.
-----. 1999. *Muslims in Dialogue: The Evolution of a Dialogue*. Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press.
-----. 1983. "Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue". *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. 20 (1): 1-4.
-----. 1979 "Ground Rules for Interreligious Dialogue". *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*. 15 (Summer): 3.

Tabli, Mohamed. 1988. "Possibilities and conditions for a Better Understanding Between Islam and the West". *Journal of Ecumenical Studies.* 25 (2): 111-153.

Takim, Liyakatali. 2004. "From Conversion to Conversation: Interfaith Dialogue in Post 9-11 America". *Muslim World: A journal devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations*. 94(3): 343-355.

Talcott, Sarah. 2006. "Youth Leadership". In *Building the Interfaith Youth Movement: Beyond Dialogue to Action.* Edited by Eboo Patel and Patrice Brodeur. Lanham, ML: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 75-82.

Taylor, Charles. 2013. "Multiculturalism or Interculturalism?". Official website for *Reset Dialogue on Civilizations*. Posted June 24, 2013. http://www.resetdoc.org/story/00000022267
-----. 2004. *Modern Social Imaginaries.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
-----. 1994. "The Politics of Recognition". In *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition.* Edited by Amy Gutman. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 25 – 74.

Teasdale, Wayne. 2004. *Catholicism in Dialogue: Conversations Across Traditions*. Lanham MY: Rowman and Littlefield.

The Interfaith Observer. 2013. Online newsletter. Accessed August 20, 2013. http://tio.squarespace.com/tio-in-canada/

Thomas, R. Murray. 2006. *Religion in Schools: Controversies Around the World.* Westport, CT: Praeger.

Tony Blair Faith Foundation. Official Website. Accessed March 2012. http://tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/page/about-us

United Church of Canada Website. 1997. "Mending the World". Inter-Faith Partnership and Dialogue page. Accessed July 27, 2006. http://www.united-church.ca/partners/relations/interfaith/

United Nations At a Glance. Official United Nations website. Accessed January 25, 2014. http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml

United Nations News Centre. 2007. "General Assembly session on interreligious dialogue advances values – President". October 4, 2007. UN News Centre website. Accessed January 3, 2011. https://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=24188&Cr=general&Cr1=assembly

United Religions Initiative (URI) website. Accessed June 26, 2013. http://www.uri.org/about_uri

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Official United Nations website. Accessed May 28, 2011. http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#a15

Van Die, Marguerite (ed). 2001. *Religion and Public Life in Canada.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Varshney, A. 2003. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life.* New Haven, NY: Yale University Press.

Vroom, Hendrick M. 2001. "Religious Truths and Basic Insights: Implications for Inter-Religious Dialogue". In *Approaches, Foundations, Issues, and Models of Interfaith Relations.* Edited by David Emmanuel Singh and Robert Schick. Dehli, India: ISPCK. 414-430.

Waardenburg, Jacques (ed). 2003. *Muslims and Others: Relations in Context.* Berlin: De Gruyter.

-----. 2000. "Muslims and Christians: changing identities". *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations*. 11(2): 149-162.

-----. 1999. "Part I – Muslim Studies of Other Religions: From 610 to 1995". In *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions: A Historical Survey.* Edited by Jacques Waardenburg. New York, New York: Oxford University Press. 1-102.

-----. 1998. "Encounters Between European Civilization and Islam in History". In *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: Chaos, Clash or Dialogue?* Edited by Jørgen S. Nielsen. New York, NY: I.B. Tauris Publications. 5-22.

-----. 1982. "Types of judgment in Islam about other religions*"*. Middle East 1. Ed. G.de la Lama (30th International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia North Africa,

1976) . Mexico City, Mexico: Colegio de México, 1982, (30th International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa). 135-144.

Wayland, Sarah V. 1997. "Religious Expression in Public Schools: Kirpans in Canada, Hijab in France". *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 20 (July): 545-61.

Wiggins, James B. 1996. *In Praise of Religious Diversity.* London, UK: Routledge.

Williams, Rhys H. 2003. "Religious Social Movements in the Public Sphere". In *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion.* Edited by Michele Dillon. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. 315-330.

Winter, Miriam Therese. 2008. "Doing Effective Dialogue – and Loving It". In *Interfaith Dialogue at the Grass Roots.* Edited by Rebecca Kratz Mays. Philadelphia, PE: Ecumenical Press. 25-34.

Wood, Lawrence. 2010. "Eboo Patel, Interfaith Activists: Bridge Work". *Christian Century.* February 23, 2010. 30-33.

World Council of Churches. 1979b. *Guidelines On Dialogue With People Of Living Faiths And Ideologies***.** Geneva: World Council of Churches.

-----. 1977. *Christians Meeting Muslims: WCC Papers on Ten Years of Christian-Muslim Dialogue.* Geneva: World Council of Churches.

World`s Parliament of Religion (now Parliament of World's Religion). Official website. Accessed multiple times from 2006 to 2013 http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/

----. 1999. "A Call to Our Guiding Institutions". Accessed March 10, 2010. http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/_includes/FCKcontent/File/CalltoGuidingInstitutions.pdf

World Religions After 9/11 Congress Website. Accessed March 24, 2007. http://www.worldsreligionsafter911.com/default.asp

Wuthnow, Robert. 2005. *America and the challenges of Religious Diversity.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

-----. 1999. *Growing Up Religious: Christians and Jews and Their Journeys of Faith.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Young, Ronald. 2002. "American Jews, Christians, and Muslims Working Together for Peace in the Middle East." In *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding.* Edited by Davie R. Smock. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press. 63-72.

Zebiri, Kate. 2001. "Muslim perceptions of Christianity and the West". In *Islamic Interpretations of Christianity*. Edited by Lloyd Ridgeon. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. 179-203.

-----. 1997. *Muslims and Christians Face to Face.* Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications.

Appendix 1 - Additional Comments on Methodology

The profile of the Canadian interfaith movement drew from primary data collected from one hundred ten interviews with individuals active in interfaith organizations in the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver and Victory. The interviews were collected between 2006, 2007, and 2008 with follow-up interviews in 2010. Interviewees were selected from contact information found on the websites of active interfaith groups. The initials contacts were supplemented using a snowball method of recommendations to talk with other active participants. Interviews were also collected from participants at several interfaith events attended between 2006 and 2010.

Seventeen questionnaires about interfaith activities on campus were circulated among University Chaplains attending a conference at the University of Victoria in 2006.

Each interviewee was provided with a copy of the attached information letter and consent form.

The semi-structured interviews followed themes outlined on the attached interview schedule. Most interviews lasted on average approximately one hour. Interviews were held in the offices of organizations, in cafes, or over the telephone.

Qualitative Interviews:

2006:
Calgary – 3 interviews
Edmonton – 4 interviews
Montreal – 11 interviews
Toronto – 8 interviews
Vancouver – 29 interviews
Victoria – 7 interviews

2007:
Halifax – 22 interviews
Montreal – 7 interviews
Toronto – 21 interviews

2008:
Ottawa – 2 interviews
Toronto – 4 interviews

2010: Follow up interviews
Montreal – 4 interviews
Vancouver – 3 interviews

Questionnaires:
2006:
Victoria - Chaplaincy Association – 17 responses

Participant Observations:
2005 – 2008 Attended ten meetings of the Comité De Dialogue Musulmans-Chrétiens Du Québec
2006 Attendance at the North American Interfaith Network in Vancouver
2006 Attendance at the UN Habitat Forum Roundtable on Religion and Spirituality
2006 Attend the Interfaith Concert in Vancouver
2008 Hosted a forum on Interfaith Organizations in Montreal

Website reviews of active Canadian and International Interfaith Organizations:
2005-2013

Sample letter given all interviewees:

Interfaith Encounters in Canada
Doctoral Research Project

Laurie Lamoureux Scholes
Concordia University

Research Project Objectives:

* Examine the range of religious voices present within the growing numbers of interfaith initiatives in urban centers in Canada

* Build profiles of various interfaith organizations and activities throughout Canada to explore the matrix of influences that have contributed to this growing religious voice

* Identify various factors that contribute to the founding of interfaith initiatives/organizations, the goals of these collectives, and the approaches employed to achieve their aims

* Examine how faith informs participation in interfaith activities and conversely, how participation in interfaith activities affect faith

Research method:

The research will be based primarily on data collected through interviews with individuals who are or have been active in interfaith initiatives in Canada.

To participate please contact:

Laurie Lamoureux Scholes
Phone: (514) 848-2424 ext 2065 (Montreal)
email: laurie.lamoureuxscholes @ concordia.ca
Post: Department of Religion, FA 101
Concordia University
1455 de Maisonneuve West
Montreal, Quebec
H3G 1M8

Thesis Director:
Dr. Frederick Bird
Concordia University Research Chair in Comparative Ethics
birdfb @ alcor.concordia.ca

Sample Consent Form Signed by All Interviewees

A Study of Interfaith Encounters in Canada

Interview Consent Form – Sample

I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING RESEARCH PROJECT:

Name of Project:

"A Study of Interfaith Encounters in Canada", research project conducted by Laurie Lamoureux Scholes as part of her Doctoral thesis for the Department of Religious Studies, Concordia University.

Purpose of the Project:

The research objectives of this project are to build a profile of interfaith initiatives found across Canada, and to identify the matrix of influences that have contributed to this growing religious voice. To facilitate this research, questionnaires will be distributed and interviews will be conducted with various individuals involved in interfaith activities in urban centres across Canada.

Procedures:

As a volunteer interviewee, you will be asked to participate in an interview at your convenience. It could take up to two hours to complete. All information collected throughout the interview may be used in future publications unless you indicate specific comments as being confidential or request the interview to be totally confidential, in which case the information will be used but with your identity completely concealed. You may indicate the level of confidentiality you desire at any time and it will be protected. Interviews will be recorded, but tapes will be kept in confidence by the researcher. Upon request, results and conclusions will be available to you at the end of the project.

Conditions of Participation:

4.1 You may discontinue your participation at any time.
4.2 The confidential nature of your comments can be expressed at any time throughout the interview.
4.3 You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer.
4.4 The results and conclusions may be published.
4.5 Interviews will be taped, but tapes will be kept in confidence by the researcher.

I understand the purpose of this agreement and I freely consent to participate.

Name (please print) _____

Signature: _____

Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Sample Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

First Part: Organized Interfaith Activities

What was your first interfaith experience? Please describe in detail.
How long have you been participating in interfaith dialogue initiatives?
What is the name of the first interfaith group/initiative you were involved with?
What was your role in the group/initiative?
How many faith communities were included in the group/initiative?
How many founding members were there?
Were the members "official representatives" from specific faith communities or individual practitioners of a faith?
How did the group attract initial members? New members?
Has the membership changed from the founding members? How? Why?
What religious traditions are not represented? Why?
What were the aims of the group or the issues that brought it together?
Has the group been successful in responding to the initial aims/issues?
What kind of interfaith activities did the group organize?
Were the activities of the group by invitation or open to the public?
How often does the group host activities?
How many members/non-members have participated in group activities?
Does the group make public statements about interfaith issues of interest to the group? If yes, how often? If no, why not?
Does the group host public interfaith rituals (confessional)? If yes, please describe. If no, why not?
Is the group still operating? Do you still participate in the group activities?
Are you involved in other interfaith groups/initiatives?
Have you noticed any significant change in the level of public interest in interfaith activities/issues?

Second Part: Personal Faith and Motivation to Participate in Interfaith activities

Which faith community are you affiliated with?
How long have you been a member of your faith community?
Are you active within your faith community?
What motivates you to participate in interfaith activities?
Have you been involved in interfaith rituals? Please describe.
How does your faith inform your participation?
How has your participation informed your faith?
Has your participation in an interfaith dialogue group changed the way you approach people of other faith traditions? What about people of no faith tradition? What about secular situations?
How do you share your interfaith work with your co-religionists?
How has the Canadian Multifaith Act impacted your interfaith work?
How would you describe the current state of the Canadian interfaith movement?
What does the future of the Canadian interfaith movement look like to you?